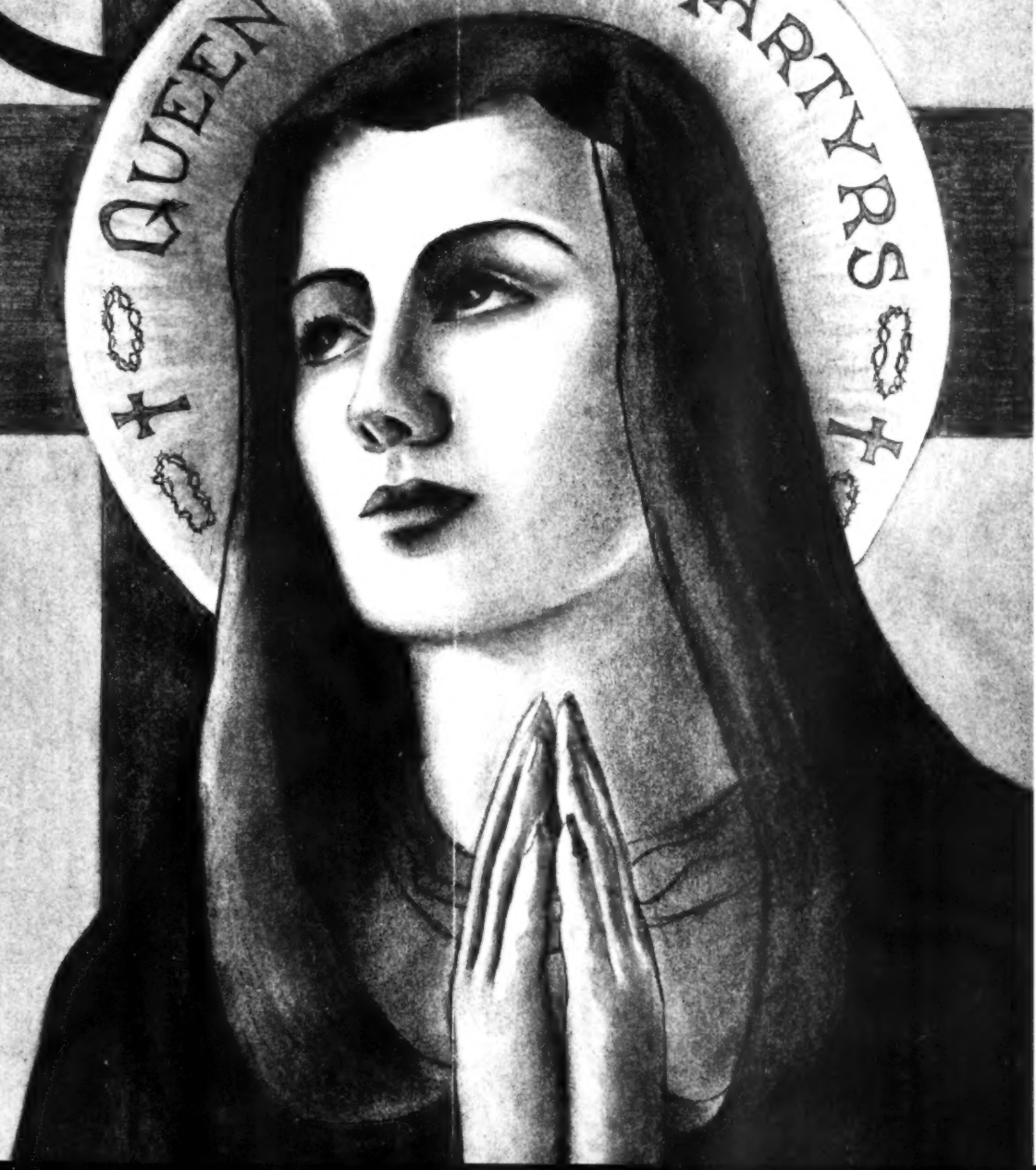
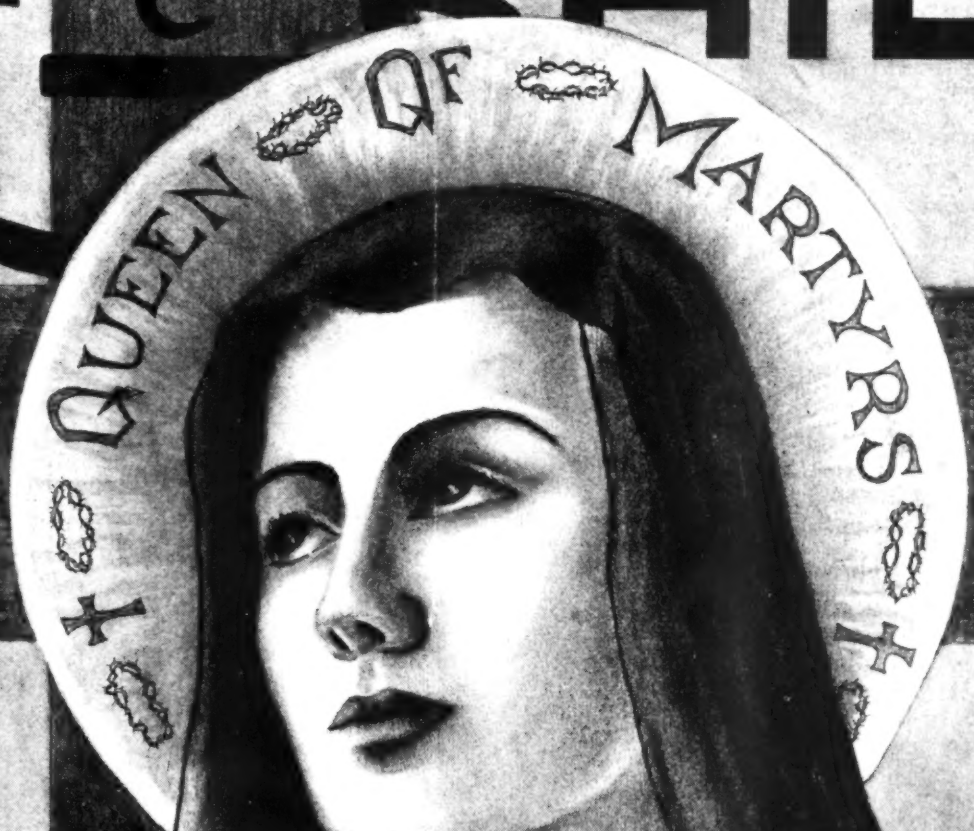


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THE RAIL



The Grail

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BETWEEN THE LINES

CHINESE EXCLUSION

H.C. McGinnis

FREEDOM of movement, by decent people with decent purposes in mind, is one of the democratic freedoms. Yet, so far as freedom of movement to and within our own country is concerned, it is one we have denied the Chinese for many years. Not only have we denied Chinese immigration to this country, but we have further imposed most humiliating conditions upon those Chinese scholars, students, and men of business who come here for temporary stays. Now we find ourselves in a ridiculous and embarrassing position. On one hand we rightly laud the Chinese as most important allies and dear friends in the fight for democracy. On the other we refuse to let them even travel or study in this country without treating them almost on a par with desperate criminals. Out of one corner of our national mouth we hail them for their courageous fight to help disprove the master-race theories held by Japan and Germany. Out of the other corner we tell them they are altogether too inferior for us to associate with them. However, there is a movement afoot to remedy this contradiction or, at least, mitigate it.

The trouble arises from the Asiatic Exclusion Act of 1924 which prohibits immigration of all Asiatics as being undesirable, and a much older law which manages to insult the Chinese directly and particularly. Under the 1924 Act, various Orientals, other than Chinese, can visit this country or take up temporary residence for business or study upon obtaining their own government's passport. But the Chinese, in addition to their government's passport, must have an additional certificate. Furthermore, with the exception of Chinese government of-

ficials, certified to as such by their government, Chinese entering the United States must undergo rigid questioning, even though the highness of their rank, culture, and intentions may be most apparent to a casual observer. Upon arriving at the shores of the New World's largest democracy, the Chinese can enter only by certain points, a rule which often costs Chinese students several hundred miles of unnecessary travel in reaching their schools. A Chinese resident of Mexico, wishing to sail from a West Coast American port to visit his homeland, must be met at the border by an immigration guard who stays with him until he boards his ship. The Chinese must pay his guard's expenses for this service during which the Chinese, perhaps one of the world's most reputable citizens, must feel equal to a criminal being deported. It is little wonder that Jap propagandists keep throwing these instances of American mistreatment at the Chinese all the time, trying to convince them that they are dupes of a nation which proclaims that all men are created free and equal while, at the same time, it maintains laws which seem to deny this ideal.

THIS condition started back in 1880 when our large scale industry began to take form. At that time the American people were fearful of floods of cheap Oriental labor, attracted by American prosperity. At first limited and then suspended, Chinese immigration was finally prohibited. However, probably in deference to the 13th and 15th Constitu-

tional amendments, persons born in Africa and of African descent were permitted entry. At that time, American ideas concerning man's equality were evidently in a very fluid state. By 1924 we were ready to declare absolutely that we wanted no part of the Asiatics here as permanent residents, even though Chinese bear the well earned reputation of being thoroughly honest, law-abiding, and exceptionally industrious.

At this writing, the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization has before it a bill which calls for the admission of Chinese under the established quota basis. This quota for nations is determined by the number of their nationals in this country in 1890. In China's case, removing the existing immigration restrictions would mean that approximately 105 Chinese could enter the country each year, these entrants to be subject, of course, to the usual rigid tests concerning health, financial responsibility, character and literacy. Surely a hundred Chinese each year, even though they may do some multiplying after they get here, would constitute no flood of cheap and undesirable Oriental labor!

Congressman Dickenstein, Chairman of the house immigration committee, stated in the House that, when hearings were held on this bill, "hundreds of witnesses and petitions representing over 80,000,000 people" came before the committee. Religious groups and civic bodies, as well as individuals, urged the repeal of the Chinese exclusion law. It would be a wonderful gesture if, by October 10, China's Independence Day, we Americans could tell the Chinese people that we have officially repented of our folly in practically denying that all men are created equal and

that we have granted her the same privileges accorded white nations. Our State Department has already completed the last technicalities necessary to our relinquishment of our extra-territorial privileges in China—an act gratefully appreciated by the Chinese—and now the removal of the stigma which we have placed upon her nationals will stand as a monumental achievement for that world democracy for which millions are now dying. Although 100 people each year would be nearly nothing when China's 45,000,000 people are considered, the Chinese people will be astonishingly grateful for this opportunity to "save face" in Asia and to join the brotherhood of man. Chinese Catholics, of whom there are many, will be thankful to know that, at last, China is considered by her American friends to be at least the little toe in Christ's Mystical Body.

IN addition to the spiritual and moral implications of this cause, there are many others. These reasons are all so cogent that they will probably convince those who usually insist upon maintaining racial prejudices, come what may. These reasons may be generalized under two headings: the present help to the war effort and the effects upon postwar conditions.

China is in a bad way from the military standpoint. The closing of the Burma Road has a serious effect upon her supplies. The Spring British campaign in Burma didn't achieve much, with the result that it meant little to China's armies. The Chinese people need a morale stiffener and need it badly. Chinese military experts have said that the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act would do much for the morale of both the army and the civilian population. Furthermore, it would tend to nullify much of the Jap propaganda. This propaganda centers on the treatment accorded the Chinese by the American people. Not only is this argument effective in China, but almost equally so in India, other parts of Asia, and throughout the Jap held East Indies. The Act's repeal might be the very thing which would keep China in the war until

aid can reach her. Should she drop out, releasing the Jap armies there for service elsewhere, the results to this nation in particular would be extremely serious. The conquering of Japan would then take much longer, with a consequently greater toll of American lives.

The postwar results from the Act's repeal would be just as important. China is the logical nation to lead Asia in establishing postwar society. To successfully do this she must have the respect of those people she will be expected to lead. This she can scarcely have as long as the American people maintain their present policy of excluding them from this country as an inferior people.

Furthermore, the repeal of the Exclusion Act may save us from another postwar depression. Experts say that our future trade must center on Asia. The Pacific will be the ocean of the future, for a developing Asia will need tremendous quantities of manufactured goods. China, now on the verge of a great industrial awakening, will need billions of dollars worth of American products. After World War I, a bankrupt Europe could not pay for the goods she needed, nor did she have large resources of raw materials which she could give in exchange. China has the very kind of raw materials we can use in our industry and by exchanging them for manufactured goods, she can establish a necessary international credit.

China, in her industrial development, will require large quantities of machine tools. The war's end will find us with huge surpluses of them. The end of World War I found us in the same condition. Then, since there was no great cash market for them, one-third of the companies manufacturing machine tools were forced to close their doors. Some went bankrupt, trying to stay in business. Many companies merged in order to hang on. This situation was a heavy contributory factor to the depression. During the past two years, this nation has produced nearly two and one-quarter billions of dollars worth of machine tools. Or-

dinarly this would mean about 20 years' production. Even though industry may continue on a high level after the war, we still have far more of this commodity than we can possibly use. For by the end of 1943, we shall have on hand over 4,000,000,000 in modern machine tools, with three fourths of this amount produced in the last three years.

Unless these surplus machine tools can be profitably disposed of, we shall see much the same condition as that which followed World War I. China offers a solution. She will need billions of dollars worth of machine tools, for postwar China will become a great industrial nation. She will need her present railroads rebuilt, plus the addition of many new ones. She will need engines and equipment, road building machinery, farm machinery and all those countless other things which an awakening nation demands. Yet this business may go to Britain or Russia should we continue our present policy of denying the Chinese the right to immigrate here, even though the annual immigration under the quota basis would be next to nothing. For neither of the above countries deny the Chinese the right to immigrate and Chinese public opinion may force her buyers to do business with nations which accord her the same social privileges given other peoples.

It is said that considerable of the opposition to the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act comes from Americans living on the West Coast. Some of these people feel that Chinese immigrants would mostly settle there. Should this be the case, the problem would not be a serious one. One hundred incoming Chinese each year should present no problem even in the Pacific area. The war has created many new manufacturing businesses there and there will be a constant labor demand. Some of the incoming Chinese would be those business men wishing to take advantage of the newly developing import and export trade between America and Asia. However, even if all the newcomers should be coolies, there still would be no serious problem involved. In any event, we are obligated to remove this constant insult to a great and illustrious people.

Momentous Decision

Dolores Green



"GOSH!" mumbled Tommy to himself. He was half-reclining on his bed just under the sunny window. He reminded one of a Roman in the days of togas and sandals. The sun threw itself across his shoulders like a brilliant blanket while it outlined grotesquely his chunky figure in a weird shadow on the carpet floor.

Slowly he drew himself up into a sitting position, knocking over his pile of school books which had been reclining with him on the bed—boy fashion.

"Gósh," he muttered again and then with wrinkled brow proceeded to stare into the street and saw—nothing. In all his fifteen years he had never had to face such a difficulty. He stared at the passing cars and studied the houses opposite with their close-cropped lawns. But again he saw nothing. He was face to face with his Big Problem.

Yesterday, Sunday, he had gone into the kitchen deliberately to ask mother, but when he saw Catherine there, he had lamely inquired wheth-

er there was anything he could do to help along. Mother had told him to mash the potatoes. His courage had oozed away and the words were lost. He had fumbled the ball. Then, Hamlet-like, he had promised himself a better opportunity.

Today he would do it. He must do it. A fellow couldn't go around in a "stew" like this all the time. It had to come out sometime!

With the resigned air of a culprit awaiting the inevitable he went slowly down stairs.

Why Mom was in the cellar! It was funny he hadn't heard a sound when he came in from school ten minutes ago. She was probably washing clothes again. He could hear the hum of the washing machine. They sure did keep Mom busy—Dad and the six of them. Only Frank was gone. Probably somewhere that had just been a dot on the map to them before. He felt a lump squeeze his palate against the place where his tonsils used to be. How could he tell Mom without making her feel too bad? She still had that wistful, far-away look ever since Frank had left a year ago.

He sauntered slowly thru the dining room. He stopped a minute to look at baby Joe curled up asleep on the couch. Little Joe couldn't help, he thought. In fact, wasn't this an added difficulty? Joe needed an older brother's steadying hand. In a few years he'd be old enough to swing a bat and require the experience of an older head on curves and fast balls. Joe's sport life depended on him. That was certain. Tommy's shoulders sagged. Hercules would groan under this one. He tip-toed out toward the back porch and down the steps into the yard.

It was a sunny afternoon, but he was in no mood for play. He saw his mother's wash dancing on the line. A chain rattled and a shaggy head emerged from underneath the steps. A tail that did everything but speak a waggled greeting, and

doggy noises gurgled unphrased pleasantries. Tommy smiled and said, "Hi, Prince." Loosing his hands from his pockets he sat on the porch step and took the huge head in his hands rubbing the ears and restraining the zealous tongue. Boy and dog soon sat, quiet, content in each other's presence.

But soon the urge was on Tommy. Slowly he rose to his feet, slipped the chain free from the dog's collar, and followed the bounding animal into the yard. There leaning against the shed was his bike. Good old bike. He kicked the tires. Good tires. Not bad for two years of wear. Brake was all right, though the chain slipped a little bit. Paint still okay. Seat was a little worn but didn't look ragged. Tommy heaved a sigh. Another day he'd have been out of the yard, yelling, "Com' on, Prince," and peddling standing up for all he was worth. But his Big Problem troubled him. Even Prince's antics failed to attract him. He turned for the house.

Down in the cellar he knew his mother was working. He heard the swish of water as she lifted clothes



from the tub. Slowly he went down the steps, and sat on the top step of the landing half way down. "Hi, Mom," he said with a show of gaiety, "workin' hard?"

"Hello, Tommy," his mother smiled as she slipped a shirt into the clothes wringer. "Just get home?"

"Uh-huh, 'bout ten minutes ago." He watched her wring the shirt dry. More clothes were wrung dry. The basket was filling.

"Want me to carry that out into the yard for you, Mom?" he asked with manly solicitude.

"You take one end, Tommy, and I'll take the other," she agreed, opening a stopcock and freeing the water.

"Aw, I'll do it myself, Mom," he said as he ducked low to avoid bumping his head on a rafter.

"Thanks, Tommy. I'll be right there, soon's I get this tub emptied," and the prudent woman smiled at her reflection in the water. My Tommy's growing up, she thought to herself, but felt comforted when she recalled little Joe asleep on the couch upstairs. She hoped that he wouldn't start yelling until this last basket of clothes was swinging freely in the breeze.

"Here, Mom," said Tommy, handing over a twisted undershirt. "I'll hand 'em to you an' you hang 'em up. It'll go faster that way," and he reached for linen in the bulging basket.

And soon the basket was rapidly emptying.

"Jimmy's getting a team together, Mom, and wants me to join. It's gonna be lots of fun. We think that old man Sooner will be sponsor and get us into the Junior League this year. Wouldn't it be swell if we'd win the pennant and then maybe go to the capital and play in the State Tournament? Gee—gosh! wouldn't that be somethin'?"

There were now two shirts left. One, white and twisted into pretzel shape, was evidently dad's. The smaller one he recognized as his own. He liked that shirt. It was navy blue, with light

slashes of red in it that gave it distinction and personality. He passed the white one to his mother.

"Guess I'll take a bike ride Saturday morning with Hank and Ted. They want to go out to the old dam and ride around a little. Be back for dinner. I hope the sun is shining so's we can get a little tan. I'll have to fix the chain, tho. Slips a little when I go up hill. But I can do that tomorrow maybe."

The white shirt was up. It bellied in the wind, puffed out its chest, and danced a stiff little jig on the line. Prince sniffed close and whined. Inactivity bored him. But Tommy played nervously with the blue shirt in his hands. His mother reached for it, a clothespin between her teeth.

"Mom," began Tommy. The quiet, serious tone made his mother glance at him in surprise. Nervously the boy kicked a clump of sod from under his foot.

"Say Mom," and he gripped the shirt more tightly in his strong young hands. "Could I go away? Could you get along without me if I went away? I don't really *want* to go away, you know, but..."

His mother's startled expression blacked-out the sun for him. He felt exceedingly uncomfortable. She took the clothespin from her mouth and stared at him with unconcealed fear.

"Tommy, where do you want to go?" she gasped. "You can't go to the army!! You're still a boy. You're not old enough!"

"Aw no, Mom," he grinned, "I don't want to go to the army. I wanta go to a seminary. I wanta become a priest."

Mrs. Sherry dropped her hands. This had come so suddenly, without suitable preparation on her part. She looked into the boy's eyes by instinct. There she saw youth, courage, determination, humility. The man in the boy could force an outward poise, but the blue eyes were on bended knees before her, silently pleading their cause. All in that moment a wave of

A NEW ALTAR

Placidus Kempf, O.S.B.

The Lord is Builder still.

When pride and greed, that fill

With human coin war's till,

Their frenzied fury will

Have spent - not from cold, lifeless stone,

But tattered flesh and shattered bone

Of victims slaughtered to atone

For man, who thought that he alone

Is Lord of all that his blind eyes survey,

And that all things beneath his lordling-sway

Must his own vasculating will obey,

And him, as god, their cringing homage pay -

The Lord of Justice, on the bomb-tilled, devastated sod,

Now being purged of pride by His sin-chastening rod

To force His subjects to obey His Will and nod,

Will mould and build an ALTAR to the Unknown God. ()*

* "I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the Unknown God'" (Acts 17:23).

loneliness overwhelmed her. A fierce revolution rose up in her soul. A bitterness that was fully human stung her heart and forced a tear into her eye. She shook it off hurriedly.

"Tommy!" she exclaimed wonderingly, enthusiastically, but he backed away. With all of a boy's bashfulness, he didn't want to be kissed. His mother saw his motion and smiled. She knew boys. The kissing could wait. There would be a time, she knew, when, unperceived, he would tip-toe in to her, throw his arms around her, and give her a bearhug and a quick kiss unseen by any others.

"Mom," he half whispered, looking stealthily towards the house. "You won't tell Katie and the others, will you? I don't want those girls to know, yet. They'd kid me and think... well, you won't tell them, I know you won't will you?" and he smiled at her confidently.

Once more she understood. Boys were creatures apart, so she laughed easily.

"Here, Tommy," she said softly, handing him the basket, "take this down to the cellar for me. I'll be right in. And bring up some potatoes from that table near the washer. I'll have to start supper right away. My, it's getting late. Besides," and she looked at him shyly, "we both want daddy in a good humor tonight, don't we?" She leaned closer. "I'll talk to him, Tommy. Now don't let it worry you."

Tommy seized the basket and started for the door. With a yelp and a rush, Prince was at his heels barking joyously. This was his game. "Come on, I'll race you," called the boy as they dashed furiously

for the house. Mrs. Sherry watched them both disappear as she flopped the blue shirt free from its toils.

With half a sigh she turned to hang it up. Then she noticed that it was Tommy's. Again that loneliness hurt and she closed her eyes. She saw an empty bed, a vacant chair in the dining-room, an idle ball and glove in a corner. She closed her eyes more tightly and prayed. Then she saw a flower-bedecked altar, heard the chant of many voices, descried figures moving to and fro. The central figure, vested for Mass, detached itself and approached her. It was Tommy. Tommy, her boy, a priest! He smiled down on her, touched her head in benediction, and gave her his consecrated hands. She opened her eyes. It was the blue shirt which was brushing her cheek. On impulse, she clasped the wet folds in her hands and kissed them reverently, then buried her face into its soft coolness for a quick little cry. She turned towards the house and espied a boyish figure in the doorway. It waved.

"Mom, the potatoes are here," shouted Tommy. "Want me to peel 'em?"

"Yes, Tommy, go ahead. ... No, wait a minute." She stopped abruptly. The thought of consecrated hands had come strongly to her mind. A queer idea suddenly changed her decision.

"No Tommy, don't bother. Call Katie and say that I told her to peel them. But you can get the bread and slice it, Tommy. In fact from now on," she said slowly, "I want you to give us the bread always."

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Did Christ Have a Little Dog?

| WONDER if Christ had a dear little dog,
All curly and woolly like mine,
With two silky ears and a nose round and wet,
Two eyes brown and tender that shine.

I am sure if He had, that that dear little dog
Knew right from the first He was God;
And needed no proofs that Christ was divine
But just worshipped that ground where He trod.

I'm afraid that He hadn't, because I have read
How He prayed in the garden alone,
For all of His friends and disciples had fled,
Even Peter, the one called a "Stone."

And oh, I am sure that a dear little dog
With true heart so tender and warm,
Would never have left Him to suffer alone,
But would creep right up under His arm.

Would have licked those dear fingers in agony clasped,
And counting all favors but lost,
When they took Him away would have trotted behind,
And followed Him right to the cross.

Lillian Castle

Selected from *Sorrowful Mother Novena Notes*

The Paintings in *Our Chapter Room*

Abbot Ignatius Esser, O.S.B.

THE HANDIWORK of God; the handiwork of man. These are portrayed on the ceiling and walls of the Abbey Chapter Room. The effect of the handiwork of God is to elicit the praise of man; the effect of the handiwork of man is to sanctify man's being. However, the handiwork of God is sadly overlooked by most persons. The result of this is that the handiwork of man is mostly misdirected. A study of the paintings of this Chapter Room affords much inspiration to the careful observer. On the ceiling we see portrayed the handiwork of God. Three rows of ceiling panels run the full length of the ceiling. The middle row has the largest panels. In each row there are six paintings, which makes a total of eighteen on the ceiling alone. We will look at those six largest panels down the center of the ceiling.

As the observer enters the only door of the room, which is at the east end, he looks overhead to see the first painting in the series of six. It shows inanimate nature. There are mountains, a volcano, waterfalls, lightning, snow, rain, a rainbow—a profusion of elements of nature. On the several surfaces of the beams surrounding the painting are the words of the "Benedicite" inviting creation to bless the Lord: Let the earth bless the Lord. Ye mountains and hills bless the Lord. Ye fountains bless the Lord.

Bless the Lord! Bless the Lord! Bless the Lord! That is the big purpose throughout. All the ceiling paintings show forth the lavish grandeur of God's creation, which ought to hold man spellbound in

admiration and cause him to fall on his knees to praise such a God of might and wisdom and goodness and love. Vain man learns something about God's creatures, turns them to his own use and benefit. And, instead of praising and thanking God for His gifts, he seeks the praise of those about him for making the discovery of how to use God's gifts for his selfish aims. One who studies these paintings will never have trouble reciting his "Benedicite" with devout and grateful attention.

The second painting rises above inanimate nature. It considers the fishes and plants in the sea. In richest combination of colors are shown in true colors all kinds of fishes, singly and in groups: a whale, an octopus, a seahorse, a cowfish, and others many, large and small. A graceful series of waves contains in each wave a school of different kinds of fishes. Deep sea plants are shown, highly colored sea flowers, sponges, oysters, sea shells. One may be inclined to wonder why God made such a grand variety of beauty in the deep sea, where comparatively few persons will even ever see these intricate beauties of nature. An infinitely good God can do this easily, but always for a purpose. The texts on the surfaces of the surrounding beams betray that purpose: Ye seas and rivers bless the Lord. Ye whales and all that move in the waters bless the Lord.—Now we know full well that no whale is going to get down on its knees and praise God. But it is constantly fulfilling by its life the plan of the God that made it. And we, seeing the whales or learning of them and all the other myriads of



things that God has made, ought to be on our knees a-plenty blessing or praising the great God who speaks to us so forcefully through His creation.

In the third painting we rise still higher in the order of created beings—to the birds or winged creatures. Big birds and little birds; some on the ground, others in the branches of trees. One delights to see the true to life production of the odd and fantastic and dainty things on wings that God has made. The eagle is there, the condor, the owl, the peacock, the flamingo, the egret, the pelican, the duck, the goose, the hen and little chicks, the quail, the sparrow, the redbird, the canary, the bluebird, the wren, and still a good many others. Tree branches and grasses and flowers serve as a base or background. And we read in this case the happy invitation: Bless the Lord all ye birds of the air. All things that spring up in the earth, bless the Lord.

Next we come to bigger things, where the scriptural exhortation reads: All beasts and cattle bless the Lord. How exalted are Thy works, O Lord! Thou hast made all things in wisdom!—A mother elephant and her baby are found in this fourth painting. A kangaroo with her baby tucked neatly in pouch. There is a majestic lion head. In one corner is a huge hippopotamus. While old Hippo was being painted a curious onlooker asked Father Gregory, the artist, whether that old fellow was supposed to be praising God. Father Gregory replied: "Yes. He is singing Gregorian Chant." He has his mouth open wide enough to sing a very rich "ah." A number of other animal heads peer forth from jungle foliage. Again one must wonder at the greatness of God who designs such big and ferocious beasts, giving to each his food and manner of life and purpose of existence. The more we think about these things, the more we are induced to praise God. Our blessed Savior gave us the instruction to "see the birds of the air" and "consider the lilies of the field." It would pay us to do this more often and more carefully. It would lead us to God the Author of nature and the maker of all things.

Having witnessed inanimate nature, fishes, birds, and beasts of larger frame, we next rise to the consideration of man himself, who fills painting number five. Then painting number six is reserved for the Angels. Two diagonal lines divide the large square field of this picture into four triangles, and each triangle contains a separate picture. The four pictures rest on or are based on the four outside lines of the square field. The pointed tops of the four triangular paintings converge in the center of the large square field. To the west side of the square we have an exquisite painting of Adam and

Eve. A big green serpent is reaching forth from a tree that bears luscious red apples. He is talking right towards the forehead of Eve, whilst she is reaching up to bring down a fine red apple. Adam is right before her, face to face. With his one hand he feebly resists her motion, the while both are failing to do what their children and children's children are bidden to do in the text: "Bless the Lord, ye sons of men."

Opposite this picture is a triangular mass of flames, from which rise up the figures of Ananias, Azarias, and Misael who were invited to bless the Lord. These are the three youths in the fiery furnace who escaped unhurt because of their faith in God and fidelity to Him. They truly blessed the Lord and were richly rewarded for so doing. We ought to try to imitate them in the scorching trials that beset our path through life.

The south triangular picture shows a majestic Abraham, about to slay his son Isaac. Beside Abraham is a towering Moses with his law. And on the other side of Abraham is the gentle David, Shepherd and Psalmist. Three lovely figures, indeed. The text of invitation: Let Israel bless the Lord.

The north picture shows a better sacrifice than that of Abraham. A priest with deacon and sub-deacon is offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass. They wear rich vestments. Lighted candles are on the altar. The scene is that of the offertory. Between the new and the old sacrifice are placed the very striking words from the Canon of the Mass, with slight modification: Mayest thou deign to accept (this Sacrifice of the Mass) as thou didst deign to accept (the Sacrifice of Abraham).

Finally, the Angels, the good Angels, the perfect praisers of God. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. There is real movement and life in this painting. What powerful figures! What sweeping flow of grace and angelic charm! Two large Angels hold a golden crown for the Christ. One on one side, and the other on the other side. The crown in the middle. Off to the side of these two Angels are other Angels blowing nine long trumpets. With gracefully poised bodies, faces close together, and golden hair thrown back, these trumpeters manifest a vehemence that truly threatens to break the cloistral silence with their mighty blasts.

Having looked up so long at ceiling paintings your neck may be tired. But think of the poor artist who stood for hours and weeks, in upright position on scaffold, with head thrown back to trace and place the delicate lines that now are ours to enjoy. May God reward the painful toil that filled six months of execution. We are now at the west end of the Chapter Room. Look at the wall before

you. It is the prize piece of the room. Across the entire width of the Chapter Room, reaching from the top of the benches to the ceiling is the lovely painting that has Christ in its center. But, we will save this till last. Having rested your necks a bit, we will again look up at the ceiling. On each side of the row of six panels previously described, is another row of six panels, as long as the center ones but narrower. With six on each of the two sides of the ceiling, we have a total of twelve panels. Through all these twelve panels, up one side and down the other, winds the Zodiac. In it are the various constellations. In each of the twelve panels is one of the Signs of the Zodiac. Beside the Sign is the symbol proper to it. In the various corners of the panels are the symbols for the different planets.

Thus we now have in our Chapter Room the Ram, the Bull, the Twins, the Crab, the Lion, the Virgin, the Balance, the Scorpion, the Archer, the Goat, the Water Bearer, and the Fishes. These create a very decorative effect around the row of paintings through the center of the ceiling. In the Sign called Virgo, the Artist (Dom Gregory de Wit, O.S.B.) used a bit of license and designed for us the Blessed Virgin, the "Virgo Singularis." She holds in her hands the shafts of wheat proper to this sign of the Zodiac. At her feet, resting on her mantle, is the Christ Child, holding a bunch of grapes. A beautiful slender moon is at the feet

of the Virgin, around her head a crown of stars.

That completes our hurried description of all the ceiling paintings, which in a general way portray the heavens and the earth, the handiwork of God, presented to rational man to be used as a means of knowing God by the things that He made. We ought to develop and foster the habit of keener observation in order to learn the causes of things. If we go far enough in this practice we shall gradually realize more and more that God is the big First Cause, primarily responsible for all the good there is in the world. We ought not to withhold our recognition of this. Give credit to whom credit is due. Shape your life and your speech in a manner that will give thanks and praise to God for all the good things that He has made and done for you. Open your eyes and ears to all nature around you and count by the thousands the divine marvels of creation and constant preservation about you. God gave you all your faculties as so many avenues to learn to know and to love Him. Admire the flowers and tell yourself God made them. Admire the songs of the birds and admit that God made the birds and taught them how to sing their sweet melodies. Admire the instinct of the animals and know that they are all taught of God. Admire the wonderful faculties in your own being. You know that you did not make them, nor did your parents design them. You are divinely fashioned for a divine end or destiny. May you reach it! *(To be continued)*

Meditorials

Paschal Boland, O.S.B.

Wink at your troubles and blink away your tears.

An angry man is like a red hot poker burning and searing all that his anger touches.

We can only *rent* the world and all its furnishings at most, but we can *buy* Heaven for keeps.

Gossip is both the thief in the night and the daylight robber of a good reputation.

There are only Ten Commandments, but a million ways to break them.

A Christian that strives to become a Saint, becomes at least a good Christian.

A stiff drink of whiskey may strengthen one's morale, but one drink too many will weaken one's morals.

Purity is the modern pearl of great price that is cast before swine by swine.

Faith in God is the best logic.

"The Good Neighbor" policy was preached by Christ nineteen hundred years ago.

Prayer should be one's *first* offensive when temptation attacks, not one's *last* defensive.

The dice are always loaded and the cards stacked against you when you gamble with Satan in the game of sin.

There are men that deny God, but they cannot deny death of which God is the author.

Sin can never be truly beautiful, for it is opposed to God Who is true and everlasting Beauty.

The Christian standard has always been single for both masculine and feminine morals.

When one loves one must speak. God loved man and thus we have the Word-Made-Flesh.

Meditorials, collected in pamphlet form, are available for 10¢. Order from The Grail, St. Meinrad, Ind.

A Not Too Pleasant Picture --

WHITHER — AMERICA?

H. C. McGinnis

THERE is a rapidly growing dissatisfaction with our home front which is reaching alarming proportions. This dissatisfaction comes from a growing belief that much of the present trouble stems from the efforts of a group within the administration to impose a brand of Socialism upon the country under the guise of wartime measures. This charge has been made repeatedly in Congress by both Republicans and Democrats and, since Congress has access to information and inside views which are seldom available to the general public, much importance must be attached to their official utterances. For, after all, Congress is intended by the Constitution to be the watchdog of American liberty. When Senators and Representatives about whose patriotism there can be no doubt feel impelled to make charges which, if unfounded, might seriously endanger wartime unity, one can feel reasonably sure that there is much more behind the situation than generally meets the eye. However, the citizen who gets about a bit finds that an awareness of this situation is penetrating nearly every segment of the public. Even many formerly most staunch New Dealers are beginning to roll their eyes apprehensively as the Socialistic pattern takes shape more and more definitely.

Perhaps this public awakening has come about more through the OPA than anything else. For, generally speaking, the public pays very little attention to Washington's behind-the-curtain stuff. While certain confession type magazines have circulations running into millions, the Congressional Record, the organ which records every sitting of Congress, has a circulation of around 40,000. But the OPA reaches so intimately into the lives of every man, woman, and child in the nation that even the least political-minded person must become aware

of the evident fact that many OPA moves are dictated to it by certain administration ideologies which do not have careful government or business-like procedures for their bases.

THE GRAIL is not a political magazine and it is not our intention to make it one. The confusion in the public mind, however, over current trends seems to have reached a pitch in which many readers are calling for a word of comment and explanation. We have accordingly invited Mr. H. C. McGinnis to outline in two articles the Congressional mind as he sees it, and fearlessly to point to abuses where they exist, knowing that democracy thrives on honest criticism. An articulate people is a healthy people. Not all our readers will agree with Mr. McGinnis's findings nor with his deductions, but at least he gives some plausible reasons for the prevalent confusion in American home front strategy. Are we on the road to National Socialism?

LET us look at a couple of these Congressional criticisms as examples of the many which are being made. It must be remembered, of course, the general objection is not to price-freezing. Had everything been frozen for the duration at the war's beginning, much of the present economic unrest would have been eliminated. Congress suggested this total freezing, but the White House replied to the effect that it would do everything necessary and that Congress could do its part by passing legislation when and if ordered. Thus rebuffed, Congress has become somewhat bitter as an over-all policy continues to be a minus quantity. Congress can scarcely be blamed for taking the bit in its own teeth occasionally as, filled with concern about the general good, it sees the administration continually jockeying economic groups against one another for

its own political and ideological reasons. Many Congressmen see fourth-term politics behind these moves, charging that administration leaders put personal political fortunes ahead of the national welfare as they coddle first this group and then that one for votes and support. Other Congressmen charge that the administration is vainly trying to make an unworkable and half-baked socialistic program work, this procedure being contrary to the people's wishes and consent. It is with this charge that we are concerned.

For example, the Congressional Record of October 19, 1942, contains an extension of remarks by Michigan's Congressman Woodruff. His quotations contain a letter sent by a Texas farmer to Secretary Wickard. Said the letter in part: "It was a bitter dose for me to be forced to plow up 1.7 acres of cotton overplanted on my farm, since I have been taught all my life that 'willful waste is woeful want.' And since this has happened to me, I have paid particular attention to other portions of the State, and I find the same thing is happening throughout the entire cotton area." This letter came about through the following letter from the Department of Agriculture: "Farm Serial No. 16080. Dear Producer: 'Measurements of the above farm serial number show there is 13.7 acres planted to cotton. Since your acreage allotment is 12 acres, your farm is overplanted 1.7 acres. The regulations governing excess cotton acreage require that it be destroyed within 10 days from date of this notice.' The plowing up of wartime cotton is bad enough, but look a moment at the procedure further laid down by the letter. Should the farmer refuse to plow up his 1.7 acres excess, he will be issued a red marketing card which will not allow him to sell his excess except upon a penalty of 8¢ per pound. Should he decide to conform to this order, he

must first make a cash deposit. This is to pay the expenses of a Federal agent's visit to his farm to make sure he has plowed under. In either case you are damned if you do and damned if you don't. And, unfortunately, penalized either way, this poor farmer, like hundreds of thousands of others, thought a war was on and that the administration wanted all production possible. It evidently doesn't want it at the expense of Socialistic regimentation. For cotton is a vital war commodity, producing cotton seed oil for munitions. With our radios continually reminding us that the war effort needs more fats and that housewives must do their bit, we discover that cotton farmers are obliged to plow under this vital wartime necessity. Continued this farmer in his letter: "It doesn't make sense to me when my wife and other wives in this community are encouraged to strain bacon fat to secure fats for munitions uses—and then force the farmers to plow under more fat in cottonseed than a whole neighborhood could salvage from meat scraps in a year." Since all current reports state that the nation is falling far behind the quota of household fats saved for war purposes, perhaps the answer lies in the discouragement of housewives who see little sense in saving in one place and destroying in another. In a democratic nation, the drop in public morale indicated by the failure of the save-fats campaign is just as important as military victories. As an aside we might mention that with the prices of cotton cloths far above their value and with many cotton goods absolutely unobtainable, more production wouldn't hurt.

THE plowing under of cotton is not the only thing which plagues Texas farmers, or any other farmers, for that matter. Said Congressman Sumners, a Texas Democrat, in the House on December 2, 1942: "I have been home recently . . . A man in the community where I used to live, whom I have known all his life, a man by the name of Wallace,—I am giving you some concrete things—was running a little dairy out there, selling milk to his neighbors, selling at the cheapest price at which he could sell, which was 10¢ a quart

delivered. Washington comes along here and freezes not the price of milk but the price to each individual. Think how smart that was. Mr. Wallace was having to compete with munitions plants for labor. Feed was up, the farmer could not continue at 10¢, and he went to Dallas to see if he could not raise his milk to 12¢. He offered to bring a petition from his customers stating that they wanted him to raise the price to 12¢. But he was not permitted to do that. He has to go out of the picture. One of the big chains sells to these same people for 14¢. His cows, some of them at least, go to the slaughterhouse." Congressman Sumners tells of another case in Ellis County, Texas, where "a fine local dairy operated . . . The people were proud of it." This dairy was caught with a 12¢ ceiling. Said Sumners: what is the smart thing which happened under this administration up here? His cows, that were not ready to go to slaughter, were put on trucks—just think of this—and hauled up to Fort Worth, about 40 or 50 miles away, in order that the milk which came from those cows could be sold at 14¢, because the biggest ceiling was 14¢." Evidently the Forgotten Man is still forgotten, even in Texas.

Congressman Sumners' speech of the above date consumed the better part of an hour and contains many exact summaries of the present situation. The following is a gem: "Of course, it is conceded that extraordinary powers must be given to the Executive in order that our government may have a stronger power and a quicker pick-up than our institutions functioning normally can provide, but that does not mean that advantages shall be taken of the public peril from without to cause the public peril from within. We need all the powers moved away from Washington that are not essential to the conduct of the war back into the smaller units of government and back into the people that we may better devote ourselves to winning this war and in order that the people, by the exercise of this capacity, can make the maximum of their contributions. You know, in a way, it is bad that these things are as

they are; but, after all, it is sort of good, for these conditions that are not right are acting as a mustard plaster on a heretofore lethargic people."

In the last above quoted sentence, Congressman Sumners has put his finger exactly upon the cause of the nation's present internal unrest. The public is finally awakening to the fact that American democracy is rapidly and surely giving place to another entirely different ideology. That the Congressman expressed exactly the feelings and fears of many of his colleagues can be seen from the remarks of other House members on that day. Said Nebraska's Congressman Coffee: "I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for the wonderful speech he is making. I feel that if the majority of the members of Congress would reflect the philosophy that the gentleman from Texas is expounding this country would be free and would be safe in the future." Said Congressman Cox, Georgia Democrat: "Can the gentleman (Mr. Sumners) agree with me in this observation that the people of this country, north, east, south, and west, have reached the point where they are willing to break with tradition and no longer remain bound to any sort of organization being used as an instrument for its undoing, that the people of my and your section are suffering indignities, hardships, and humiliations that were not excelled in the days on the carpetbag rule?" Said Congressman Gifford of Massachusetts: "Our hearts rejoice to hear the gentleman." Said Wisconsin's Keefe: "It is time that we begin to become awake and alive as to what the people of this country are thinking today. I will tell you that they are awake, they are thinking, and they are going to have something done or they are going to do it themselves." There are many people who keep an alert ear close to the ground on public reactions who will agree with the above statement. The public is girding itself to restore democracy in our national life, should not our social schemers see the error and futility of their ways in time. Just what form this action will take is perhaps known only to God.

PARENTHOOD BY PROXY

William Lautner

DO YOU want a baby! That's a normal desire for a normal family.

"But we can't have any children." That, of course, is sad if it is so. But how sure are you? Perhaps you may not know that there are many families now enjoying their children and yet never "had a baby." As long as there are Foundling Homes and Children's Institutions (and if past history is any indication of the future that will be for a long time to come) there is no reason for any home to be childless. So if you want children and can't "have a baby" how about giving the Foundling Home or the Children's Institution a little consideration?

The technique of modern child welfare has a variety of ways of placing children in desirable homes. Through adoption, foster or boarding home placement thousands of homes are being filled with the laughter of children each year. Modern science has a way of placing the right child with the right family.

Enter now the villain: Mr. (or if you prefer) Mrs. Gossip, saying all you have heard relative to "red tape."

Forget, for a moment, all you have heard about the "nosey" Social Worker, and consider what actually takes place in the process of child placement.

So you want a child. The first thing for you to do is to file an application with a recognized child-placing agency of high standards. This may be your Department of Public Welfare, or better still for you as a Catholic, your Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities. Your pastor will be glad to give you the Director's name and address. Then while you await a reply from the agency examine the motives which prompted you to file an application. Do you want a child to satisfy some unfulfilled

ambition of your own? Have you some pet theory of child care that you wish to prove? Have you just lost a child of your own and do you want this one to supply for that loss? A little self-examination is a good thing and will later on prove beneficial for a satisfactory adjustment. So ask yourself: "Why do we want a child?"

"Maybe we don't want a child after all." Now wait a minute; don't get faint-hearted. If the thought of responsibility frightens you, probably you are the parents the agency is looking for. What good parent isn't frightened a bit at times with the thought of responsibility for rearing a child of God!

And so the agency representative, called the visitor, comes. She may come alone, or if you have made application through the pastor, perhaps he may come along and ease the tension by giving customary introductions. Pleasantries past, the business at hand is undertaken. Then perhaps for the first time you learn that there are a variety of ways in which a child can come into your home. More surprising, you may learn for the first time that there can be no permanent placement for at least a full year. To have such a year of probation

you learn is the practice of all good agencies.

Adjustment of personality to personality is no trifling matter. It is a relief for the prospective parents to know that the agency is as near for assistance as is the telephone or postman. A phone call or letter will bring prompt response from the agency and help in whatever difficulty may arise.

"But what is this about the various ways in which a child can be placed?" For infants and smaller children there are especially three ways open: adoption, foster home care, or boarding home placement. Some people are amazed to learn that



THINGS WE THANK YOU FOR

adoption is a comparatively rare thing. In the case of infants adoption is quite common. But as the child advances in years and is left on in the Institution the foster home and the boarding home comes into its own and serves a real need. Many a child has enjoyed the environment of normal home life and has grown into normal adulthood because of placement in a foster or boarding home. In the foster home the child is treated as a member of the family without legally becoming such. In the boarding home the child is treated as a member of the family; the family is paid a specified amount of money for the care of the child; but the child remains a ward of the agency. In the case of adoption the family takes the child unto its own and the child is legally given the name of the family with full right of inheritance.

One anxiety that disturbs some people interested in taking a child into their home arises from the question whether the child will be normal, physically and mentally. This anxiety can be and is removed, as far as human skill is capable of removing it, by any recognized standard agency. It is the work of the visitor to adjudge the home and then recommend a child that as near as possible will fit into that home. To aid in this process the visitor is supported by the work of the medical doctor, the psychologist, and the psychiatrist, who administer searching physical and mental tests to the child. These tests, of course, do not insure perfect compatibility, but when they are accurately administered and carefully considered in the light of mature common

sense they do indicate potentialities both mental and temperamental that go a far way in bringing together persons who will be compatible.

The old practice of placing children merely on the choice of parents-to-be, a choice often made because of personal appearance, is no longer followed because it is neither fair to child nor parent. Personal appearance is not nearly so good an indication of satisfactory adjustment as similarity in mental ability between parents-to-be and child. Personal attraction should be considered, for it does have its emotion benefit, but it would be unwise and unfair to overemphasize this to the neglect of considering other more important factors to satisfactory adjustment.

Yet with all the care that precedes placement, patience from the parents and guidance from the agency is needed. This is especially true during the period of probation. But this is a very small price to pay for the contentment of a home complete with children. Today when the cruel arm of

relentlessly insane and total all-out war is snatching young fathers, leaving sometimes orphaned children, sometimes childless families, the Christian adjustment would seem to be adoption. Many a broken heart has been healed by the love and the merry laughter of a child. It is enchanting music to a parent's ears.

So if you want a child, why don't you contact your pastor today and get in touch with your Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities. Remember St. Joseph fulfilled his mission on this earth by serving as a foster father.



CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY

The Eighth Article

DEMOCRACY'S SECOND PHASE

H. C. McGinnis



COMMUNIST outcries against economic injustices in non-totalitarian countries are wholly justified. Also, generally speaking, these injustices can be correctly laid at the door of democracy. Not because democracy is inherently unjust in economic matters, but because democracies have been extremely slow in advancing into democracy's second phase—economic democracy. For some reason or other, followers of democracy believe it pertains only to political rights, whereas it is in reality a complete way of life. There is economic and social democracy just as there is political democracy.

Since American political democracy can scarcely be improved upon in its structure, although it can stand vast improvements in its morality, we Americans have come to believe that the struggle which our colonial forefathers waged for political freedom just about closed the book insofar as democratic advancement is concerned. Occasionally we amend our Constitution to make it more applicable to current conditions, but outside of that we do little towards democracy's advancement into its further phases. Instead we senselessly consider Communism and Socialism, and occasionally even Fascism, as solutions to the economic difficulties of our current industrial age, whereas we should be studying the implications of democracy when applied to economics.

If the changes necessary to effect economic democracy seem quite revolutionary at first, we must remind ourselves that they are not nearly as revolutionary as the changes required by communism or any other form of totalitarian government. Yet drastic changes must be made if we are to do more than unsatisfactorily patch up our existing system which, by now, has conclusively proved that while it is capable of producing much wealth, it also tends to concentrate this wealth into the hands of a few without regard to the economic needs of the nation's public. Although some steps have been taken to check this concentration and a great many proposals are being discussed, most of them are aimed at particular classes instead of creating a broad natural economic justice. The taxing of money

from the very rich and distributing it among the very poor is, of course, a partial solution; but it makes no provision for those who are not poverty stricken and yet suffer uncomplainingly many economic hardships. Future generations of democratic people will not want their economic equality effected by financial handouts, relief grants, or various forms of dole. They will not feel that they should be forced to report to the Commissioner of the Poor to qualify for that share of the nation's produced wealth which is naturally theirs.

"But how can we effect a better distribution of wealth unless we continue to permit the established agencies for the making of big money to continue to make it and then take it away from them?" many people ask. A good counter question might be: "How long will the big-money making agencies continue to make money if they are continually relieved of their profits by legislation which is aimed at a particular class?" The answer is, not very long: big capital will go on a strike. Should this happen and the nation's big money holders retire on the huge wealth they have already laid away, nothing could be further gained except by confiscation. This is un-American and undemocratic. Confiscation comes under the functions of Socialism and Communism. Furthermore, such a remedy would only patch up a system which admittedly does not work for the common welfare. The solution lies in establishing one which does work for the common welfare from the ground up. Just how to do this, the selfishness of human nature being as it is, has many people scratching their heads in perplexity; yet there is no reason why economic democracy should not parallel in its conceptions of man's rights the political democracy we already have.

In the first place, we must begin to consider the individual's economic rights, as naturally his under the Constitution as are his political rights. We must cease believing that only the worker who can sell his services to an employer for the employer's greatest profit has any right to a share in the nation's produced wealth. Justice never intended that the boundlessly rich resources of this vast country should be the private gold mines of a few who hold

their positions through superior force, legal chicanery, and sometimes downright piracy. The right to share in the resources of a country belong to the people who inhabit it, based upon their willingness to do their parts, not only as workers but also as members of the community as a whole. Labor must begin to have social aspects as well as the ability to make profits for its employers. While it is true that vast amounts of capital are needed to develop a country and to keep it in increasing production as the standards of living rise, there is no rule in the book of justice which says that the capital or money end of production should get all the profits over and above the smallest wages it can get by with. Capital is entitled to a fair rental for its use and labor a fair wage for its part. When these items are paid, capital and labor must share in the additional profits in ways commensurate with the risks they have each taken and their contributions toward the production of those additional profits. This division will be peculiar to each line of endeavor, for obviously the risks and contributions of both capital and labor are not the same in every venture. The division in each case must be arrived at by consultations between the interested parties, with a spirit of justice and fairness prevailing. Since cases wherein the division of additional profits of production have been fairly split between capital and labor, the records show that both have gained immeasurably. Capital gained more than it did when selfishly keeping all the profits to itself. Labor has scarcely scratched the surface of the production of which it is capable when it cooperates fully with management, eliminating the tremendous waste of time, effort and materials which always results when workers have reasons to believe they are being denied their just dues.

But a division of profits between capital and labor is far from the complete set-up which economic democracy demands. What if employers and workers do whack up the profits of their production, what happens to the unemployed which will continue to steadily increase as machinery replaces manpower? Must the big bugs continue to be thought of as legally and morally entitled to the nation's produced wealth, even though they can produce it mostly by machinery which eliminates the bulk of the nation's workers? Must that rapidly increasing number which will be displaced by machinery become economic wards of the State, reduced to accepting pitifully small government hand-outs? Has the American worker and his family no right to share in God's plenteous bounty unless he can compete against machinery in such a way as to make a nice profit for his employer? Must the standards of living of the American people—or of

any people, for that matter—depend upon the profit motive entirely? And more especially so when it is the profits of employers which are considered solely? Is man's ability and worth to his community to be measured solely by his ability to produce profits for a certain individual and a group of individuals? It is the wrong answers to these and similar questions which are the cause of economic injustice and its resulting miseries.

This seems to pose a knotty bunch of perplexities, yet let us apply what we already know and see what we can make of it. Let us consider one of the first principles of our political democracy. It is this. When a child is born into the American nation, it inherits full political rights which can be taken away only because of abuse of them. Each baby American is an equal shareholder in the gigantic political corporation which is known as the American nation. These rights are based upon the fact that all individuals stand equal before their Creator and are therefore entitled to equal shares of that natural freedom and justice which the Creator has designed for them. The new born American's political rights are not based upon his father's ability to vote intelligently, to hold political office, or to even properly fulfill his normal obligations of citizenship. The parent can be a life-termer in a penitentiary without prejudicing the political rights of his children. This is a well recognized democratic rule, for justice demands that no one's rights be curtailed in any way by circumstances over which he has no control and which are not of his own making. Yet although this rule has been in operation since the beginning of the American nation, we entirely overlook it when it comes to economic democracy.

When an American baby is born, he is entitled to a fair share of the nation's produced wealth. He is entitled to share in the standard of living which the nation can normally afford its citizens, this standard to be based upon the nation's produced wealth. His right to decent economic conditions should not, in all justice, be based upon his father's value as a profit-making unit to an employer. Nor should it be based upon the number of brothers and sisters with whom he must share the family income. If this were the case, all babies would elect to be born into one-child families if they had the power of election. But they haven't, for such matters are in the hands of the Creator Who places His children as He sees best. Therefore, economic justice demands that we work out a system which does not depend upon the value of a citizen to his employer's profit-making ambitions. This means two things: first, we must establish the worker's value to his

community upon a social as well as an economic basis; and secondly, we must consider the family, and not the individual worker, as the economic unit to be considered in a proper distribution of the wealth resulting from production.

Why should we give labor a social value as well as an economic one? Because the individual's value to this community is largely made up of his social contributions. This requires the practice of man's brotherhood instead of having the community a collection of highly individualized and self-centered persons. In any nation, the people must live as a community. This is already a recognized practice.

In time of war, for instance, the individual must forget his selfish interests in favor of community good. He must, if necessary, give his life for the protection of his community, even though he may not have a family or any material possessions worth fighting for. Unfortunately, however, the individual is judged to have a social value only when sacrifices are required and not when benefits are to be enjoyed.

We shall next discuss why labor must be given this social value and why the family must become the new economic unit if economic democracy is to exist.

GOSPEL MOVIES

BY P.K.

SKY-ANGLE NOSES



PRIDE is weakness. It must use cunning and treachery to attain its purpose. When the Jews told the Savior: "Depart, and be on thy way, for Herod wants to kill thee," Jesus gave them a thumbnail sketch of his character in the words: "Go and say to that fox" (St. Luke 13:31-2).

The Victim is now brought bound to this "fox." He was "exceedingly glad, for he had been a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard so much about him, and he was hoping to see some miracle done by him. Now he put many questions to him (Jesus), but he made him no answer" (St. Luke 23:8-9). A "fool" had asked more questions than Eternal Wisdom would answer—lest He make known the shallow emptiness of his crowned knowledge chamber. As a reward for this delicate consideration on the part of Jesus, Herod treats his prisoner as a fool—"with contempt and mockery, arraying him in a bright robe"—and sends Him back to Pilate.

To be snobbed, to be considered a fool, to be treated with contempt, to be despised, are painful barbs in sensitive hearts. Such treatment has caused men to eat out their hearts in secret, for man is attached to his good name, the good esteem of his fellowmen more than to his life. It is the last thing he gives up. Even the mangy, mongrel cur that is booted from door to door has self-respect. Good esteem is what makes a man walk upright. To be considered a good-for-nothing, reason-robbed, and intelligence-bereft being crushes him into the very dust like a worm. One day this worm may turn.

"Herod mocked him."
—St. Luke 23:11.

UP BY BIG BUTTE



by
MARY LANIGAN
HEALY



The Mannings are a family of six, augmented temporarily by the arrival from California of two nieces and a nephew to live in Copper City, Montana, until their sick mother is able to return from the hospital. While the shadow of a strike in the mines hovers over the community, Julia Manning learns that her husband has been injured on his way home from the school at which he teaches. After some weeks at the hospital, he is now at home.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

IT WAS Saturday afternoon and Julia was happily engrossed in her latest domestic hobby. Her fingers were flying in the deft wielding of a metal crochet hook and from the process there was fast evolving an attractive rug. The materials used in the making were long silken strands of mellow hues. These had once adorned the legs of the feminine Mannings as silk hose. Julia had read in a magazine about this method of rug making and she'd been delighted with the results. She was most delighted, however, that such a task was adaptable to conversation.

Tom was her companion this afternoon as she sat in the full light of the bay windows with her work and he leaned restfully back in his Morris chair. It was a number of weeks now since Tom had come home from the hospital, weak and shaken, but showing no other marks from the accident. Once Tom was home, Julia felt the job of regaining strength

was as much hers as it was his, which indeed it was. For rest and nourishment and an easy state of mind were the prerequisites the Doctor had set down for his immediate program.

Tom had just come downstairs from the nap he ridiculed but which nonetheless he took each day. No one else was around. Settled in his chair he asked, "I don't want to be too personal, Mrs. Manning, but might I inquire as to the whereabouts of the various occupants of this house. The population seems to have thinned out since noon."

Julia laughed, "You do miss them once they're out of the house. I don't think I'd thrive in an atmosphere away from the noises they make."

"Nor I," said Tom. "In fact I think it was the silence which woke me up."

"Perhaps," said Julia, "you've been conditioned to at least six delicious flavors of bedlam and your system can't stand the jolt of peace."

"Depends on your definition of peace. But we'll let that pass. Tell me where all these youngsters are."

"Shall I check them off on my fingers, one by one, or shall I give a general report?"

"I much prefer the one by one method."

While Julia examined a worn stocking so that she might snip it round and round so that it became a docile snake in her lap she explained, "Well I'm obviously occupied in rug making. And incidentally this use for stockings with runs is quite con-

soling. I used to get downright sick at that crawling sensation of a run or when I saw one of the despicable little ladders on Clare's or Fran's pet hose. Now I just chuckle to myself, 'Ah, aha . . . now I'll get that beige for rug,' or 'Goody goody . . . the tan's just the ticket for the borders.'"

"You always were a scheming sort of person."

"I know. That's how I happened to marry you. I knew I'd have some one reliable around to pay my stocking bills as long as I lived." As she spoke she knew she'd have to desert her task any moment now to cross the room so that she might touch him. The least contact would satisfy her. A rumple through his dark hair, the feel of his cheek against her hand, a match cupped in her palm for his pipe. She felt that frequently nowadays. Ever since the accident in fact. He was so dear to her. She had to reassure herself that she had not lost him. Sometimes wretched dreams came over her at night and she struggled back to consciousness, grateful all over again that it had been God's Will to leave Tom with her.

She laid down her work and settled on the arm of his chair with an arm loosely over his shoulders, "There's no football game in town, so . . ."

"They all went skating?"

"More or less."

"By that do you mean that there's less skating and more tumbling as far as Ruth is concerned?"

"No. I didn't. Ruth, by the way, is fast becoming more proficient on ice than her very proud teacher, that one of your daughters named Sue."

"The one who tends towards stoutness?"

"The same."

"She tends to it at every meal, doesn't she?"

"She's a darling," Julia defended, "and she's by no means fat. Why in a year or two she'll put it all in height."

"I know," Tom said, "and don't think I'm not looking forward to the Sue we'll have, growing up to look like her mother. Red hair and all. In other words downright beautiful."

"What an Irishy sort of tongue you have. Well, that takes care of Sue and Ruth. Now Dave as you know is out of town with the School of Mines team. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they could beat the 'U'? Dave says they haven't got a chance but I know he has a sneaking hope they will."

"Are Barn and Hank working in such perfect skating weather?"

"Yes, they are. They're hard at it at the newsstand earning those checks that send them into such delirious spasms of pride each time they bring them home."

"They have a right to be proud. I wish they didn't have to work."

"They don't have to and you know it. That's what makes the fact of their working so wonderful. After all, that they should take it on themselves at sixteen to assume some responsibility for this household is pretty nice. There's lots of lads their age who never have a thought about anyone but themselves."

"I know that, dear; they're good kids."

"It's funny to hear Mr. Goldstein talk about them. You'd think they were his sons. And he's very good to them. All during the football season he's managed to give them practice and game time free and let them make up the time later. More than that he goes to the games himself and roots his head off for Christian Brothers High."

"I saw him yesterday and he said, 'Mrs. Manning, that Barney and Hank are O.K.,' and as I meekly agreed you'd think they were his instead of mine."

"Are the girls at the rink too?"

"Um hum," said Julia, and for the moment her mind left Tom and she was seeing Clare and Frances as they'd set off, trim and lovely in their brief skating skirts and high necked sweaters.

"What are you pondering?" Tom asked.

"To tell the truth it just occurred to me that I'd better put an extra plate on the dinner table."

"Did they say that they'd bring home company?"

"Not exactly. As they started out Clare said meaningly to Fran, 'Mother never cares if there's someone extra at dinner, do you Mom?'"

"And what did Frances say?"

"Nothing. She blushed."

"And what do you make of that?"

"Walter McGruder."

"Old Mac? Why the girls hardly know him. They've only seen him those few times when he came over on something about the classes."

"Did you ever hear a song called *I Took One Look At You?*"

"But Julia. They're such youngsters. Clare's only eighteen."

"Clare is only the accomplice. It's Frances. And Frances is young but she's been compelled to age quickly, her Mother being sick and all. Seriously, I think she likes your Mac. And I'm pretty certain that if he shows up at the rink he'll end up dining with the Mannings."

"He'll be at the rink all right. All Copper City under draft age will be there a day like this."

"The mention of draft age gives me a thought. It's very likely you'll be losing a substitute. His number will probably be called."

"And you'll lose the hero of your romance."

"O K," said Julia, "Don't say I didn't tell you."

"Well there's no nicer young fellow in my acquaintance than Mac."

"If Frances is attracted to him, I'm glad she feels free to bring him home."

"Well spoken, Mrs. Manning."

"Well received, Professor M."

Lightly she kissed his ear then went back to her crocheting.

The days were fast growing shorter and at five o'clock there was a threat of darkness. Ruth and Sue were the first to come home as their skating site was the natural rink in the hollow of the hill where obliging water froze over when flooded. Red cheeked and happy they came in clamoring for food.

"We're starved, Mom."

"Gosh we're dead," declared Sue.

"For the first condition I can offer you bread and jam. For the second there's rarely a remedy."

The two giggled in appreciation and while they swung their skates over hooks in the summer porch, Julia spread wild choke cherry jam with her most lavish hand. Food tastes wonderful when you are a little girl just come in from the out of doors. And when you are such a little girl there is no such thing as spoiling your appetite for the evening meal.

Dinner tonight was to consist of the huge cut of roast beef which had been slowly cooking all afternoon on the metal meat rack in the oven. Gradually as the heat penetrated into the center of the roast, increasingly tempting odors had emerged. Now at five o'clock the entire house was bathed in the appetizing scent of well prepared food. Sweet potatoes added their fragrance to that of the meat and the tang of cauliflower heralded their vegetable desirability. Julia was pleased with the promises of dinner. If Frances wanted to bring company home she wanted the child to be proud of what was offered there. Her home. She wanted Frances to think of it like that. Not just a place to stay for a while.

For Julia the presence of the cousins was ever a source of delight. Hers was the incomparable pleasure of witnessing gratifying growth in every way. The lean form of Barney was filling out and small Ruth was less timid and nervous than when she came. Frances had proven to be a great help to Julia. She was eager to lend a hand at housework and while Tom had been in the hospital had insisted that the meals be left to her planning and preparation. Because of this thoughtfulness, Julia had been able leisurely to visit Tom and that had meant a great deal to husband and wife. Now that Tom was home, it was Julia's turn to insist that Frances step out as a youngster should.

The boys came in with loud greetings and declared their intention of a shower before dinner time.

Julia smiled at them in their bunched cords and jackets. "What were your literary activities today?"

"Cleaning the stock room. Too dirty to be associated with literature."

"My hair isn't grey," Barney assured them. "It's honest dust on my head."

Sure enough Walter McGruder was with the girls when they appeared a short time later. There was a deep tone of laughter behind them as they came up the porch steps and they came in still laughing at whatever was among them. He was taller than either with a shock of curly brown hair which gave him a boyish look. He must be twenty-two, Julia decided, but he looks a good deal less, all eager and laughing as he is. The skates glistened in the lights reaching out from the living room. "Good evening, Mrs. Manning," said Walter McGruder as Julia stepped forward offering her hand. "The girls said it was all right for me to come along like this but at a word from you I'll vanish into the night."

"We're delighted to have you," assured Julia.

"You bet we are," Tom called from his chair.

"Oh, good evening, sir," McGruder strode toward Tom and Julia turned her attention toward the girls. Clare was pulling off her beret, and her soft hair came slowly down, mistily becoming about her face. Frances had not moved. Rather she stood against the door as when she'd come in, looking after Walter. Her young lips were slightly parted and her blue eyes seemed a deeper hue than ever with the tannish hair tumbling shoulderward. That hair of hers was a mixture of shades, some of which were gold. She was not aware of being watched and suddenly Julia turned away as though the sight of Frances at that moment was a thing so fragile that even a glance might be rough enough to mar it.

A short while later as Julia made brown gravy and lifted a striped roast from her rack she felt poetry singing in her head and frothing through her veins. Such poetry possessed her that she felt its rhythm in her being. It was a poem without words but it was lovely nonetheless. It had to do with being young and good and being wrapped up in a dream so obviously that any passerby might see. Julia slid a platter under the meat and poured the gravy in the bowl. With a glance she checked her meal and then called for everyone to come to the table. She smiled a bit to herself and thought, "Tim and I were like that." But as she carried her roast into the dining room and caught the clear gaze of his grey eyes she ceased to smile to herself but gave her wide smile to him. As she did she amended her thought, "Why Tom and I are still like that."

CHAPTER TWELVE

"THE MUSIC is good; isn't it?" asked Clare as she and Walter McGruder paused in their dancing about the Manning living room ever so slightly to adjust the radio dial.

"I beg to correct you, Clare," said Walter, his hair a bit tousled from an hour of dancing, making him seem more boyish than ever. "The music is more than good. It's perfect." His eyes left Clare and were intent on the slim form of Frances moving in graceful rhythm in the arms of Hank. It was apparent that he was finding perfection in more than the music.

Julia sat near Tom watching all of them. It had been a good evening, one of the nicest. There was a feeling of fullness about the old house tonight, almost a brimming over of the things that made it dear. It occurred to her that the distress of the world could seem far away when the near things were tall enough in joy to rise up brightly between. Of course misery remained in the world three thousand miles away and perhaps three blocks down the street. So too did the cold night press against the outer walls; so too did November's wind wail about the barren hill, but the fire on the hearth was cracking good cheer and the music from the ether waves was meant to be matched with dancing.

It's not possible to heat the great outdoors. It's not even any affair of ours that winter time chills the air. Our business has to do with our own particular duty in our little way of life. One woman is responsible for just one home. One woman has only to attend to the feeding and caring for those within a single home. With that she must be content, even though she ache in sympathy with the troubles of a universe. Compassion and prayers are due the misery of the world but the world at large is yet guided by His Hand. God has His own reasons for sending darkness on the bright trail of sunset. So too must the gloom of earth be born out of premeditation of the Deity.

The youngsters were singing along now with the music as they danced; "Si Si Si, That's my love song for a penny. Si Si Si.... My penny serenade...."

It was one of those love songs tinged a bit with sadness. Somehow young people always seem to prefer that kind. Is it because they can only vaguely understand but nevertheless sense the fitness of the sobbing undertone? "Si Si Si.... And then I will remember...." One always remembered the songs to which one danced. Funny how a vagrant bar could on occasion recapture an hour or a day or a lifetime. This song was possessed of a haunting melody and a lyric that would stick to

memory. What would it bring to Frances some future time around the years? Might she perhaps hear it a long time from now and suddenly come back to the Manning living room? Would she see again the dull-toned Madonna hanging above the fireplace, the much trod-upon expanse of rug, the young faces of the others there? "Then I will remember...." Would she recall in renewed delight, "Why that was the first time I danced with Walter." Where would he be placed by then? A pleasant memory or much, much more?

Partners were changed now and Clare was moving easily in unison with the long free stride of Hank. Walter and Frances were together. Clare's face did not tell her Mother much. Heavy lashes were like curtains over the grey eyes. Julia wondered about the preoccupation she'd noticed in her daughter of late. She hoped Clare would be ready to share her thoughts soon. Meanwhile she would be content to wait. From where Sue and Ruth had been playing checkers in a corner, there came a sudden burst of sound. "A tie! A tie!" Sue exulted, "We're both the champions."

"You are at that," Tom agreed, walking over to the two little girls.

Julia's glance followed him. With satisfaction she noticed that his big frame was winning back its flesh, that his color was ruddy, not just from the mellow lights of the house. Chafing now at the last restrictions of convalescence Tom was not a good patient any more. This she told him often but he only grinned and suggested that she cooperate in releasing him from any semblance of sickness then. It would only be a short while longer now before he could again assume his regular routine of activity. But until then, Julia was determined that every possibility of new strength should be sought.

"Sorry," she said, "now it seems a pity to interrupt but I think it's just about time for certain members of our party to go to bed."

"Meaning," Tom suggested, "none other than the two champs and myself."

"Meaning those three you mentioned." Julia agreed.

At sight of Tom's empty chair and the putting away of the checker board, Barney called, "Time for the gong?"

Julia nodded and Barney went to the radio and as soon as the announcer's voice cut in he switched off the power. Quickly the group which had been spread about the large room and into the hallway drew tightly together. Clare and Hank came hand in hand toward the small snug space of all where the fire shadows beckoned on the rug. Sue and Ruth and Tom came too, and Walter McGruder looked questioningly at Frances.

(To be continued)

FAVORED CHILDREN

by
ANTOINETTE COPPÉE

IN THE closing months of 1932 a great stir which has not yet been forgotten was caused throughout Belgium and beyond by the reputed appearance of Our Lady to five children, four young girls and a boy. In the apparitions of Lourdes, one child was privileged to behold her, Bernadette; in the case of La Salette, Mary appeared to two children, a girl and a boy, Melanie and Maximin. But in the present instance we have five children asserting that they have seen and conversed with Our Blessed Lady!

In the accompanying pictures are the five favored children of the Voisin and Degeimbre families who claim that they have seen the Blessed Virgin. At the time of the event the Voisin children, Gilberte, Albert, and Fernande were thirteen, eleven, and fifteen years old; while the two Degeimbre children, Gilberte and Andrée, were nine and fourteen years old. Healthy and normal children, they convey no impression of being high-strung or extraordinary children. Though they are the children of Catholic families the parents had not often been seen at church for years, hence it is not to home influences that one could easily ascribe these apparitions of the children.

The apparitions took place in the garden of the convent school at Beauraing, which is situated just outside of this market-town of about two thousand inhabitants, on the highway to Vignée-Rochefort, south of Dinant. Besides the elementary school, the Sisters of Christian Doctrine conduct a high school for girls, some children of Beauraing attending as day students. On the grounds near the school building and built against a railroad embankment is a grotto modeled after the one at

Lourdes. It has no artistic pretensions. Of the three Voisin children only Gilberte then attended this school. Nor were any of the Degeimbre children going there then as Andrée had left there the previous July. Hence the connections of the children with the convent cannot be said to be very close.

About half past six one Tuesday evening, November 29, 1932, the other four children called at the convent for Gilberte Voisin to bring her home. The four came up the walk to the school and Albert rang the door-bell. Then he looked around as did the girls and saw a light behind them. At first they thought that it was a car but on looking closely it appeared to them that the statue of the Blessed Virgin of the grotto was moving. Gilberte Voisin as she came out of the door also saw the apparition. Frightened the children hurried home.

The following evening the four children again called for Gilberte at the convent and saw the apparition more clearly and were not so frightened, although they ran home again. However, the next evening, Madame Degeimbre and another daughter, Jeanne, accompanied the children with some friends. As they neared the place the four children cried out that the Lady was standing near the railing, a beautiful Lady with rays of light proceeding from her head and forming a halo of glory. She disappeared but Gilberte coming out of convent saw her again, and the other children turning saw that she was quite near, almost touching the ground, walking between the threshold of the convent and the grotto. But only the five children saw her. Later on in the evening, the two mothers and a couple of others came again with Fernande, Andrée, and Albert.

These three saw the vision again and fell on their knees as if struck down and said a Hail Mary.

In this and many following visions the children fell to their knees not out of mere devotion but in an ecstatic trance, becoming insensible to what else was happening around them. During a ten minute period of vision doctors experimented on the children. Dr. Lurquin applied a burning match to one of them, their ear-lobes and calves of their legs were sharply pinched, and the hands and face of one was pricked with the point of a pen knife, yet the children made no movement. Nor were there any traces of the burn, bruises, or scratches when they examined them after the vision. The children did not even know that the experiment had been made; they felt nothing, heard nothing. Little Bernadette of Lourdes was likewise known to be insensible to pain when she saw Our Lady.

On Friday, December 2nd, when the vision came again, Albert asked: "Is this really the Immaculate Virgin?"

The vision made a sign of the head indicating that she was. Then the boy asked: "What do you wish?"

"That you be very good."

There was no vision on the third of December, but then from the fourth to the eighth Our Lady appeared daily, this last day being the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The children came daily and said the Rosary, but they did not see Our Lady again until the thirteenth and fourteenth; and then once more on the seventeenth, nineteenth, and twentieth.

On the seventeenth the children asked the vision: "The priests wish us to ask you what you want."

"A chapel."



Gilberte, Albert, and Fernande Voisin



Gilberte and Andree Degeimbre

On December the twenty-first three of the children testified the vision said: "I am the Immaculate Virgin." That day a dozen doctors were present and a crowd of between fifteen hundred and two thousand persons. The next day the vision appeared but said nothing.

Doctor Maistriaux told Fernande Voisin to ask the vision why she came. During the apparition of the twenty-third Fernande asked and received this answer: "In order that people may come here in pilgrimage."

On Saturday, the twenty-fourth, the apparition was renewed, twenty-eight doctors and six thousand people being present. Then there was no further vision until the twenty-eighth and the twenty-ninth.

Before vanishing the vision usually stretched out her arms a little. On January the first, when the vision did so, four of the children saw the gleam of a golden heart surrounded with luminous tapering rays. This happened again the next day after the vision said that she would speak secretly to each of the children on the morrow.

And January the third was indeed the great day, for the visions reached their climax and their end.

Some twenty-five thousand people were present and eighty doctors. These noticed that the children each interrupted their ecstatic prayer for a moment. Albert Voisin and Gilberte Degeimbre both say they were told a secret by Our Lady and then told goodbye, as also does Gilberte Voisin.

To Albert Our Lady said: "This is between us and you may reveal it to no one." Neither he nor the other two have revealed the secrets.

Besides the secret, Our Lady told Gilberte Voisin: "I shall convert sinners. Goodbye."

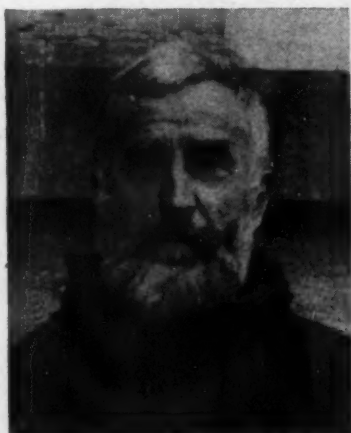
What Andree Degeimbre heard was: "I am the Mother of God and the Queen of Heaven. Pray always. Goodbye." No secret was confided to her.

Fernande Voisin saw nothing at first and did not fall to her knees as did the other children. The others left after their vision and went to the grotto

to sing a hymn while Fernande stayed and recited a decade of the Rosary. Suddenly, as if struck down, she fell on her knees. To Our Lady's question of: "Do you love my Son?" She answered: "Yes." "Do you love me?" "Yes." "Then sacrifice yourself for me." She disappeared without saying goodbye.

Since that day the vision has not been seen by any of the five children. Every evening for years, if they were in Beauraing, they returned to the place of the visions and recited the rosary, one decade for the conversion of sinners and another for the sick. They went to Holy Communion daily and continued their simple lives as before. The many pilgrims that came to Beauraing took up much of their time, yet they always remained the same, these five favored children.

ECHOES FROM OUR ABBEY HALLS



ON July 26, one month to the day of his previous visit to our monastic family, the Angel of Death came again. This time he took Brother Martin Deck, O.S.B. Just a few short months ago we wrote his history, that of a simple happy monk, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of his Profession (*The Grail*, May 1943). Of Brother's eighty-three years, fifty were spent as a monk in the various duties assigned him in obedience, namely, as a missionary in our Indian Missions, in the monastery re-

fectory and power-house, and twenty-five years in the Minor Seminary taking care of the students' laundry and other duties. The integrity of his character, the constancy and fidelity which he manifested during these many years was an inspiration to all. May he rest in peace!

On August 5, the Feast of Our Lady of the Snows, nine young men were admitted to the Novitiate for the Clerics. During this year they will devote themselves to a study of the Holy Rule and ascetical life under the direction of the Master of Novices, Father Henry Brenner, O.S.B. The following are Frater Novices: Frederic Hammerstein (Evansville, Ind.), Philip Daly (Wyandotte, Mich.), Francis Dippel (Evansville, Ind.), Sylvester Wimsatt (Evansville, Ind.), Joseph Ferrari (Fort Smith, Ark.), Henry Dieckhaus (Philadelphia, Pa.), Otto Ostidick (Elgin, Ill.), Robert Armbruster (Shelby, Ohio), and Jerome Taylor (Chicago, Ill.).

On August 6, the Feast of the Transfiguration, eight young men who just completed their year of Novitiate pronounced their Triennial Vows. Each was given a new patron Saint and will be known under the new name. These eight

young monks hail from eight different States. They are Fraters: Martin Sprug (Oklahoma City, Okla.), Richard Hindel (Indianapolis, Ind.), Pius Fleming (Brooklyn, N. Y.), Theophane Gonnely (Atlantic City, N. J.), Alphonsus Carlson (Compton, Calif.), Cosmas Regnier (Auro-



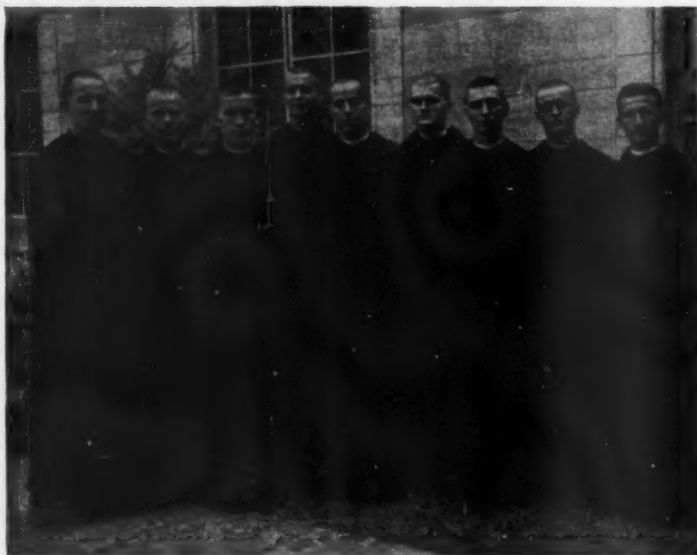
Chaplain Joachim Walsh, O.S.B.
commissioned in July, 1943



ra, Ill.), Ambrose Frey (Pittsburgh, Pa.), and Austin Caldwell (Calvary, Ky.).

Also on August 6, to the tolling of the great bell in the Abbey Church tower, two monks pronounced their Solemn Vows, thus dying to the world and being re-born in the spiritual life. They are Fraters Polycarp Sherwood and Donald Walpole, both of Indianapolis, Ind. On August 8, in the ceremony *Aperitio Oris*, they received their chapter rights and became full-grown sons of the monastic family, sharing all the burdens and responsibilities of their monastic coming-of-age. Both will be ordained to the Holy Priesthood this Fall.

On August 7 three young men were invested as Brother Candidates. After six months they will become



Brother Novices. All three attended St. Placid Hall, our Preparatory School for Benedictine Brothers. They are: Brother Candidates: Raymond Eckels (St. Louis, Mo.), David Hellman (Louisville, Ky.), and Paul Skovran (Pittsburgh, Pa.).

The Annual Laymen's Retreat will be held the week-end of August 27-29. The Retreat Master is the Very Rev. Placidus Kempf, O.S.B., Prior of St. Meinrad's Abbey.

The following recent appointments have been announced by Father Abbot: The Very Rev. Alcuin Deck, O.S.B., as Subprior of Marmion Priory; Father Celestine to Stephan, So. Dak.; Father Casimir to Marty, So. Dak.; and Father Timothy as Superior of Stephan Indian Mission in South Dakota; and Father Justin as Pastor of Dale, Indiana.

A Leader Pays for his Position

Calvin T. Ryan

A LEADER is always a step ahead of the crowd. That is why leaders are always lonely. Lincoln, despite his jovial nature, is usually shown in his later years as being lonely, desiring but not always receiving congenial and

sympathetic companions.

Socrates was so far above those whom he taught that his compatriots thought he was a social danger, a non-essential citizen at least. He must have felt lonely at times. Saint Francis of Assisi, who spent so much

of his time close to nature, so many nights on the hillside, must have lacked social contacts, even though he was living the life he preferred.

Paul in prison and Jesus on the way to the Cross were lonely men. They had upon their shoulders the

tremendous weight of a great movement. They often found their nearest friends failed them, or failed to understand them. Jesus often retired from the group and communed with His Father, Who did understand Him.

Our presidents are protected from the public touch by barriers insurmountable. No one can stand within specified distances of the curb in front of the White House as the president drives out the gate. No visitor unceremoniously walks into the White House and asks to see the President.

Yet there seems some human desire for power, some innate longing to rule others which drives the ambitious to seek what must often be a lonely and despicable existence. Lord Byron, speaking doubtless from personal experience, wrote:

He who ascends to mountain tops,
shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in
clouds and snow.

So with high position, the man thus elevated often finds himself "wrapped in clouds and snow." He does not find the warmth of friendship, the neighborliness, the unselfish interest which he enjoyed with his former associates. It is for him a cold world. Shakespeare must have known what it meant to be ex-communicated, to be shut away from friends, when he put into the mouth of Lord Mowbray in *Richard II*, these words:

What is thy sentence then but
speechless death,
Which robs my tongue from breathing
native breath?
Lord Mowbray had been exiled by his monarch, and to him it was to be "speechless death" not to be able to communicate with his friends.

Byron writes:

He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those
below.

How true! Though we may admire the very man whom we have elevated to a high position, yet there is likely to be a corresponding jealousy, if not hatred, of that same man. It is difficult to love our superiors, more difficult, perhaps, than it is to admire them.

Sometimes we kill the person who holds the position, not because we dislike the person, but because we associate him with the position he holds. The anarchist shoots the president, not because he dislikes Lincoln or McKinley, but because he hates those who have authority over him. Even love and hatred are so closely allied emotions that we find a man shooting the woman he loves. The woman, in a sense, has subdued the man; so she is placed in the position of looking down "on the hate of those below."

Though high above the Sun of Glory
glow,
And far beneath the Earth and
Ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly
blow
Contending tempests on his naked
head,
And thus reward the toils which to
those summits led.

Socrates they put to death, not because he, physically at least, or even materially, surpassed or subdued his fellow man. Rather they put him to death because he was a step ahead of them mentally. The leader is not only often lonely, but he also often finds it dangerous to be a step ahead of the crowd. There are always those who are ready to shoot from behind. Fifth Columnists are no new creation of the present decade.

Nevertheless, if there were no one willing to live among the "icy rocks," no one willing to walk ahead and lead the crowd, we should not have progress. Not everyone who aspires to leadership and authority is selfish. Not everyone is taking the step to gratify his own ambition. Plato stood out against the Sophists and declared that man was not the center and measure of all things. Amos and Jeremias were not afraid to declare themselves even though they must have seemed very iconoclastic to those about them. If we may believe Sherwood Eddy, leaders of the new order, the prophets of a given time, "appear when most needed in periods of crisis and transition in the dialectic progress of history." The great Christian martyrs of the early church must have been leaders

utterly driven by some urge to better mankind.

It was far better for Jesus to be crucified than to make Him an earthly king. Those who called themselves His followers were brought more intimately into the unbreakable chain of circumstances which has given us Christianity. Those who plotted against Him would not have been satisfied with Jesus upon a throne. They would have been jealous of their own limited positions. Lincoln dead could do more good than Lincoln alive. Saint Francis in his little earthen cell could do more good than Francis the inheritor of his father's goods.

The hope of peace in the world does not depend upon the early demise of the German, the Italian, or the Japanese dictator. At present they may appear on the mountain top, and of necessity looking down on those who hate them. But Hitler dead will be equally dangerous, if not more dangerous, than Hitler alive. He represents a movement in the world, a movement antagonistic to democracy. It is a struggle to death. The hope of peace in the world lies in the victory of a movement which is founded on peace. Such a movement may take a Hercules who can strangle the snakes which try to destroy him in the cradle.

Even such a modern Hercules will have to ascend the mountain tops, will have to look down on those who for selfish reasons hate him. Such a man will be a step ahead of the crowd. He will have to be mentally and spiritually invulnerable to the mountain-howitzers trained on him. From whence shall come such a man?

Truly such a man will be raised up by God, just as Moses was, just as Lincoln was, and whenever or wherever this takes place, we shall find the man possessing the qualities sent into the world by the Man who died ignobly that such qualities might be set free in the world. He will pay for his position, but there will be for him internal as well as external rewards.

Pinch Hitting from the Pews

Martin C. Whaling

FATHER JUDSON will make a swell chaplain. Everybody likes him and he's a good sport, and darn it, he can make a fellow want to pray. He can kind of put the idea across so you feel downright proud of your religion and you march up to Communion every month with the gang as natural as anything. Besides that, you always have fun when Father Judson is around. We'll sure miss him at the Club.

It was at a club meeting that he told us his commission had finally come through and that he was leaving in a day or so. We forgot all about our rules of parliamentary law and everybody was talking at the same time and most of the talk had question marks.

Of course it was hard to pick out one question from the general bunch shot at Father but these were some, "Where are you going?" "Will you be in the air corps or infantry?" "How will people know you are a priest if you wear a uniform?"

Father put both his arms up as though he were dodging blows and that's when Tony's question shot out all alone so it could be heard.

"What I want to know is, Father, who will take your place here?"

That same question had been worrying all of us ever since we'd heard that Father was waiting for his papers to come through. You see, we'd had experience where a change in priests had shot some parish clubs to bits. Like the time we were boy scouts and had worked so hard for our uniforms and the priest who had started us out was transferred and that was the end of the scouts. All of us are now at least sixteen or seventeen years old

and we aren't kids any more. We'd had our ups and downs and now that we hit it off so well with Father Judson we hated like anything to see him go.

Everyone was quiet waiting for the answer to Tony's question because the same question was in every other guy's mind. "Who would come in place of Father Judson?"

Father grinned. "To tell the truth," he said, "no one is coming into this parish to take my so-called place."

"But gee!" Ernie Morris said, "We've always had at least two priests here at St. John's."

"My, yes," said Father, "and we've always had more than four gallons of gasoline when we wanted it too."

"You mean the war has something to do with it?" someone asked.

"That's right."

"And Father Green will take over the whole shebang?"

"Yes, and no." Father said.

"What do you mean, yes and no?" That was from Tony.

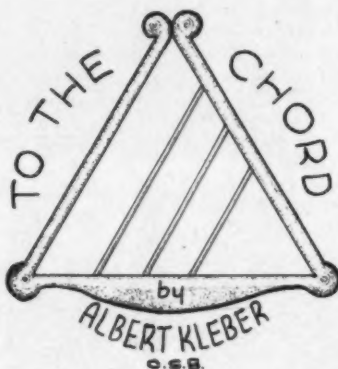
"And what does the war have to do with it?" I put in.

"Come at me e-e-easy! And I'll answer you."

We settled back for him to explain. He began, "The Pastor will be without an assistant, so he'll have to take care of all the things which only a priest can do."

"Only a priest can say Mass," one of the Sloane twins said and we all gave him the razz, but Father nodded, "You've got something there."

He was smiling as he spoke and he went on, "It takes a priest to say Mass and to hear Confessions



Work of the Three in One and One in Three,
True echo of Eternal Harmony,
With Triune fingerprint upon thy soul
To tell the nature of thy source and goal,
Thou glidest gently, like an angel wing,
Into the realm of sound; and—wondrous thing!—
What, lacking thee, were naught but babbling noise,
As music, now, is Heaven's luring voice.

As in thy graceful flight thou bear'st aloft,
Swelled with the world's emotions, that so oft
Throb in thy breast, I soar on thee, as on
The vibrant daring wings of hope-flushed dawn,
Into the day of boundless jubilee—
Aye, to the Three in One and One in Three.

and to take care of the other Sacraments but there are a good many things around Saint John's Parish and every other parish, that lay people can do as well as priests. And sometimes just a little bit better. Because Catholic Action needs lay people if it is real Catholic Action. Now, who can think of one job I've had here, which some one else could take over, instead of expecting Father Green to, with the more work and less time he's bound to have?"

A long slow whistle came from Bill Schmidt. "I know one job!" he yelled.

"Nice going, Bill." Father said, "You were right under that fly."

We all twisted our heads toward the second row where Bill was to try to figure out what he and Father were driving at. Bill is about the best short stop in the CYO league and he rates, you can bet.

"It was a fast one but I was under it," Bill explained. "I think you mean that us guys ought to be able to carry on our club alone."

Father nodded, "No error, boy. That's what I had in mind. It's only an example. You could draw up your plans, talk them over with Father Green, and run in to him if you were ever in a spot, but this club could be an independent organization, self governed and all that."

By that time all our heads were nodding like a room full of Charlie McCarthys with someone pulling a string.

It wasn't taking away from Father Judson and all he'd done to make our club top notch to say we would run ourselves as good or better alone. It was handing him the biggest orchid Winchell ever dreamed up. If the club fell apart, it would be letting him down. If we carried on, it would show that we'd caught on to what he stood for and that we hadn't just come to meetings, and gone to Holy Communion and things like that to please him because he happened to be such a regular guy. See what I mean? It would prove something pretty big, if the club was a success by itself.

"Somebody asked what the war has to do with it." Father gave me a look. That's the way he is. He gives everybody credit for being a person, whether a fellow happens to be any great shakes or not. "This is just one parish in one city, where a priest isn't going to be replaced after he joins the army as a chaplain. There are a lot of others. And not just the club, or particular organization a priest has been in charge of will feel the loss of another priest, but soon every man, woman and child in the parish will feel it. Do you know what that means? It means that the people of a parish will..." But Bill interrupted him and said, "The people will have to pinch hit from the pews."

We all laughed and Father did too. He nodded toward Bill to see if he wanted to say anything else but Bill was through, so he bowed and said, "Take it away, Chaplain Judson!" And boy, did he take it away!

He told us plenty. He gave us something to remember him by all right, all right. And he talked straight. He told about how cozy our church has made it for us here in America. How we've had Masses at all the hours most convenient for us, and little services like Confessions on Sunday mornings and all. How there's even an extra priest on hand to read that long Gospel once a year while the one who says Mass reads it in Latin so the Mass won't take too long. He mentioned lots of other things that we'd just taken for granted because we'd always had them. He told about the old days when people had to get their religion the hard way because they wanted it bad enough. "Yes," he said, "there's a priest shortage just like all the rest."

"Tires, for instance," some wise guy said.

You can't stump Father Judson. "And no retreats," he grinned. "But let's stay with Bill's ball game. Everybody will have a turn at bat and the winning team will be the one where everybody plays ball. It will be necessary to go to Confession when there's a priest to hear it, and not when a person has a notion to go. And the parish activities will rest on the good will and good strong arms of the parishioners. They will just have to get in there and pitch. Because there will be fewer and fewer priests in the coaching box. And not just today or tomorrow or even for the duration, but a good long time after the war as well."

One of the Sloane twins, the one who is always about one lap behind the gang, asked, "Where will all the priests be?" He sounded like he thought they'd be in concentration camps someplace.

"They will be where there's the greatest need. With our fighting men, for instance. After the war they will go wherever the United Nations are represented, patching up the bad spots, taking care of people who have been a long time away from God because of no fault of their own. They will be back in the foreign mission fields." He paused, "As a starter, this priest will be in Boston at Harvard University where a special training course is offered by the Army for Chaplains. After that, maybe the jungle, maybe the desert. I'll let you know later, Johnny Sloane."

"Gee, Father," Johnny said, "I was just asking."

We all laughed because Johnny is always scared to death he's put his foot into something when he hasn't at all.

"You've got a right to ask," Father said. "And the answer is so big I could stand here all night and

still not give it all.

"For instance, the United States is one of the few places in the entire world where boys and young men are permitted to spend time in preparation for the priesthood. Let me give you an idea of what that means. Just suppose that Notre Dame's crack football team was made up of only eleven players. A minor injury to a player could mean the game. And with no promising sophomores coming up for the next season, that team would be a pretty poor bet as a champion. Well! In the European countries even the priests who are ordained are not given a chance to carry on their priestly duties freely and openly. What they do they must do by stealth, at risk of life itself. In many cases they have been thrown into prison and concentration camps, their personal as well as church property confiscated by the powers that be. Foreign missionaries are sent away from the fields they've built up by a life time of sacrifice, and all the lads who might be priests are in the fighting lines. So what does it come to?"

"Lend Lend," some one said.

Father seemed pleased and said, "I'm a better orator than I thought; I've certainly put the idea across. Lend lease is a good way to put it. On the other hand we might call it payment of a national debt, when the United States takes over the burden of supplying priests for the world. France and Ireland and Spain and all the other countries have sent us priests almost up to the present time

when we were looked upon as a missionary field. Now we can return the favor at a price."

"What price?"

"The price of sacrifice at home."

"We can take it," Jerry O'Shea said.

"Of course you can," Father Judson agreed. "Not just this club but all of America can and will."

"That's the old fight talk," Bill Schmidt said.

"It is a fight for every one of us. They said Americans were soft until those numbers began to be shuffled about in a fish bowl in Washington. And we quit being soft. If American Catholics have taken their religion for granted, the reason is because this generation never had to work for it. We have proved we can take it as far as our fighting men are concerned and now we will prove..."

"We can dish it!" we all yelled together. We had used that sort of pep talk in the club before. The yell we gave was a big one and I think we all felt better after it. It's no fun to tell a priest good-bye who has been the friend to us Father Judson has and who means so much as he does. Why, he's regular. He's tops. He's white and has what it takes. Why, Father Judson is so swell I couldn't help but blurt right out, "Gosh, Father, I'm glad you're going into the army."

Not a fellow there took me wrong because they all began to clap their hands like mad and Father understood because he said, "Thanks fellows, Thanks a lot. That's a mighty fine compliment."

HOW NOT TO SMOKE IN ONE EASY LESSON

Mary Millard

I HAVE smoked for nearly twenty years and for at least five of that I've wanted to quit but could not—or THOUGHT I could not. I tried to several times but without more than a tiny spark of success. I had periods when I "cut down" but they were of short duration. For instance, when the quota set was eight per day I could always find my weak wishy-washy will inventing some reason why one more would do no harm, and from nine it went to ten and in a week or two it was back to a package a day.

The desire to quit was a worry and a strain. I was haunted. "I shouldn't smoke this one," I'd think, lighting up. I hated myself for such weakness and cigarettes too because they bossed me around so. Tomorrow I shall quit, I'd say, but tomorrow came and breakfast and what is coffee without a cigarette and anyhow why deprive myself of something I really like to do and what's the harm, etc., etc.? But deep down I knew it was harmful and I'd be better off without them and I was alternately provoked and defiant. But I quit—and I'm glad—and when I really and truly got down to brass tacks it wasn't hard at all.

Last Fall I was praying for a very special intention. Someone I read (I forget who it was) said

that one should not "bargain with God" but somehow, I don't think making a promise to deny oneself in return for a favor requested is exactly bargaining as we know it or think of it. Bargaining or not I have always found it a most effective way of praying. And so I vowed that if my prayers were answered I should not smoke for a year.

My prayers were answered and my gratitude was so great that what had seemed an unsurmountable hurdle, a tremendous deprivation, became as nothing. It was all so definite, so final. I simply thought: this I have promised God, this is my debt for favor received, this I shall pay gladly in gratitude and thanksgiving.

Any habit so firmly laid, so long carried on is not broken with complete ease. The first week, and the second had moments in them when I yearned for just one puff—but there is such definiteness in a promise, especially one to God. And after the third or fourth week there was no more yearning and only an occasional twinge of desire and now after six months' abstinence I hope I never go back to being bossed around by a little piece of white paper with weeds in it. Efficiency increases greatly, one is keener, more alive. And think of the saving in health and pennies!

"THE LORD ALONE THOU SHALT ADORE..."

Henry J. J. Ameling

THERE is a direct relation, a relentless proportion, between world catastrophes and the adoration of God by man. When you and I and all men adore God, there is world peace. But when we do not adore God, then wars, afflictions, and all the spew of ill harmony torment the world.

We know that the world today is in trouble for it is ripped asunder with cataclysms, wars, and diabolical machinations. If it is true that adoration of God and world peace go hand in hand, and since there is no peace, then the reason must be that the world is not adoring God. Therefore, we must return to adoring God.

What is adoration of God? We adore God when we acknowledge our dependence on Him, submit ourselves to Him, and concern ourselves with Him. Adoration is "honor shown to God because of His excellence and supreme dominion." And this honor must not be a mere lip service, but our whole life must convey that honor, that submission, that adoration.

That we might adore God is one of the reasons why He created us. There was peace and happiness in Paradise; as long as Adam and Eve adored God by obeying His command against the forbidden fruit there was no discord, no sickness, no suffering, no death. But there came a time when Adam and Eve refused this submission to God, this adoration of God; they wanted to be like God. And we are still shaking from the shock of that first idolatry for some of the consequences of original sin are still with us.

If the Old Testament is examined, this is the conclusion which is drawn: When the Jews adored God and kept His commandments, then they had prosperity and peace; but when they no longer adored God by disobeying His laws, then their enemies plagued them with wars and oppressions. The



two books of Paralipomenon show that conclusion especially. The book of Judges has a definite rhythm of first apostasy, then punishment (defeat in wars), followed by repentance and finally delivery from oppression. Consider this text: "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they served Baalim. And they left the Lord of their fathers... and they served strange gods... and they adored them; and they provoked the Lord to anger... And the Lord being angry against Israel, delivered them into the hands of plunderers;... But whithersoever they meant to go, the hand of the Lord was upon them..." (Judges 2:11-15).

Idolatry is the adoration of false gods and it is the sin for which God punished the Israelites. Human nature must adore something; thus, when humanity does not adore God, then it adores false gods. Whatever form this idolatry takes, and there are many forms, God punishes it.

These false gods are not little images or statues but they are ideas. The world is bound and enslaved to ideas; it has subjected itself to ideas that are wrong. This is the idolatry which God is punishing. These ideas come from a wrong thinking by people. The "wrong thinking" is called "materialism."

Materialism is the basic form of modern idolatry. Our age is a materialistic age; our age is guided by a materialism, "denoting a marked interest in, and devotion to, material concerns and material things." Material things are things of this world in distinction from the things of the next world. The difference is between temporal and spiritual values.

Ancient people subjected themselves and honored idols, material idols and statues; modern people subject themselves and honor ideas concerning material things. These ideas are many, a few of which are world dominion, money, and pleasure. All these ideas consider primarily things of this world. It is true, that in a confused way we do consider the things of God and of the future life but in actual living they are practically disregarded.

World dominion has so gripped the world that all nations are grasped in a brutal and savage fight to secure it. Of course, I am not unpatriotic as I do admit that under the present circumstances we must fight for our existence. But the point is that nazism, communism, fascism, capitalism, and imperialism consider world dominion so important that any means is legitimate as long as that means secures it. Truth, justice, and mercy must fall by the wayside. And truth, justice, and mercy are things of God and of the future life.

To the individual, money is something closer to his private form of idolatry. Money is supposed to be the medium of exchange and standard of value. It is a servant of man in that sense for instead of the impracticability of using barter and exchange we use money. Today, however, money



has a different meaning. Today people want "money" as they want other commodities. Money has taken on the importance of a thing desired for its very self. Money no longer serves mankind but mankind serves money in that so many concern themselves with the all-important thing of getting money. Money is thus adored in that sense.

Pleasure, security, ease, are other idols. Greater value and consideration are placed upon these things than upon the things of God. As a specific example, artificial birth control is practiced instead of natural birth control because it entails a good deal more pleasure. Quite often, of course, these things are not wrong in themselves (artificial birth control is wrong, though, in itself) but the evil and idolatry is in their abuse and they are abused when preferred before the things of God.

These are the idolatrous practices of our times. Parallel our times with the times of the Old Testament. They subjected themselves to material idols; we subject ourselves to the ideas of the preference of material things. Just as God punished it in the one case, so also shall He punish it in our case.

Nor do I exclude Catholics from this idolatry.

Reflected in the Sky

I gazed at the clouds, one evening,
Reflected there, so plain,
I saw a Mother weeping
O'er her Son, who was slain.

Close in her arms, she held Him,
Her head, in sorrow bowed,
Her long hair floated o'er Him
And screened Him from the crowd.

He was slain on the field of battle,
He died that we might live,
He suffered and bled for His Country,
His life, He was willing to give.

Then the Cloud Pictures altered,
I gazed with wonder and awe,—
For the weeping Mother, was Mary
And Christ's, was the Face, that I saw.

—Hope—

materialism and progress" (*Orate Fratres* Vol. 17, p. 36). Not only the world but also Catholics worship at this shrine.

The world must repent and return to the adoration of the true God; it must be concerned with the things of God rather than with the things of

That this war is our chastisement is the opinion of a Belgium Benedictine monk. Writing to an American friend, he wonders "whether the appalling war destruction caused by a brilliant machine civilization was not permitted by God because of widespread Catholic worship at the shrine of

the world. It is not a multiplication of novenas and tridua that will appease God's just anger, but a return to adoring God will appease him. I'm not condemning novenas and all extra prayers which are inaugurated to appease God so that He will hasten to alleviate our woeful condition. We do need these prayers to bring us back to God.

But there is this sly danger that we consider this war as a fact without any reference to anything else; there is the danger that we be too near-sighted. We must realize that this war is a punishment and punishments are never without cause. Hence it will only cease when the cause for the punishment ceases. In other words, this world strife is a means to bring back to God his people and only when people return to God will it stop. It will not stop merely because a sufficient number of prayers are said but it will stop when these prayers "convert" us and bring us to a union with God.

This union with God is adoration. Through prayer we adore God because we acknowledge Him as our Lord and we submit ourselves to Him. That is what God wants. Nor is this subjection to God

degrading but is rather elevating. We do not think it degrading for a child to admit its dependence on its parents but we think it proper as is natural and, moreover, that child would be condemned who spurned and despised its parents. How much more, we, who are God's children?

For Catholics, the Mass is the highest form of worship. Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, said that for a peace which would be lasting, (such a peace demands a change in men's hearts and minds), we must go to Mass at the altar of our God; "In the face of the enormity of the disaster we have indicated there is no other remedy than that of a return to the altars, at the foot of which numberless generations of the faithful drew down upon themselves divine blessings..."

When the Mass influences our lives, when we begin to live the Mass, then we adore God. And when we adore God, then will peace, a Christian peace, pervade the world again. "Rejoice and praise O thou inhabitation of Sion; for great is he that is in the midst of thee, the Holy one of Israel" (Isaias 12:6).

IS GOLF ON SUNDAY UNHOLY?

"THE CATHOLIC Sunday seems to end at noon!"

"Noon? Look at the golf courses! Plenty of Catholics out there every Sunday from 9 a. m. till dark. And I know some who play cards for money on Sunday evenings—members of the holy Catholic Church!"

Dear Neighbor, to the above accusations, the writer of these words pleads guilty. But guilty of what?

Is the walking over God's hills and vales on a Sunday unholy, because, while walking, I knock before me a little white ball? Is the sitting in my home 'midst friends of a Sunday evening unholy because, while sitting, we deal out bits of cardboard and perhaps bet small sums to lend interest to the game?

If my golf or my cards interferes with my worship or the worship or peace of my neighbor—if these games bring with them anger, blasphemy, envy, cheating or some other sin—if the money lost is damaging to anyone—then, and only then, are my games unholy on a Sunday—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday.

The Catholic believes that the prime requisite of keeping Sunday holy is worship. He believes that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is, as it has been from the birth of Christianity, the supreme act of adoration. Therefore the Catholic assists at Mass every Sunday in every season, through every kind of obligation is to refrain from unnecessary servile work.

Many Catholics, at the recommendation of the Church, attend services also of a Sunday evening and spend parts of the day in prayer and good works; but never does the Church command, nor the individual feel, that innocent recreation for mind and body can be turned into evil by the day of the week on which they are enjoyed.

The Catholic's way of keeping Sunday holy is his own. For the non-Catholic who observes Sunday sincerely in another manner, the Catholic has nothing but the greatest respect. This same respect he asks from his neighbors of other creeds, who, we believe, must also give the Catholic credit for sincerity.

Catholic Information Society of Narberth,
P. O. Box 35 Narberth, Pa.

Is Your Speech Clean?

Calvin T. Ryan

A CHARACTER that I recall from my boyhood memories was generally known as "Devil Lev." Just to call the name is not to get much of a picture, but to me, having known the man, it is singularly characteristic. I suppose, inconsistent and inappropriate though it is, that was the man's "Christian name." Young and old spoke of him as "Devil Lev Collins."

Swear! Oh, how that man could swear! He swore at everything and at everybody. He swore in a straightforward comment, in his casual speech. He was vulgar. "Devil Lev!"

"Devil Lev" came to mind when I read Monsignor Sheen's little book, "The Shield of Faith." Monsignor Sheen has a section headed by: "How do I stand before God in my words?" He asks, "Is my speech clean? Do I take the name of God in vain?" All of us need to ask those questions of ourselves occasionally, for we are likely to slip. "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

"Devil Lev" would not have appealed to General George Washington. Washington was "sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice heretofore little known in an American army, is growing into fashion." Washington appealed to his officers to check the "wicked practice" by their own example, for, said he, "we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms, if we insult it by our impiety and folly."

Happily, we can turn to our Bible for verification of our teachers' emphasis on the importance of the right kind of speech. Our language should be a sacred thing to us, and to misuse it is a sin. It is not for naught that one of the distinguishing features of man is that he can talk; that he can communicate his feelings, his thoughts, his opinions. With it he can persuade; he can explain; he can entertain. He can bless God, and, unhappily, he can curse God. Listen to a man talk and you will get an outer demonstration of what he is inwardly. "Our language is us!" "The good man from his good treasure brings forth good things; and the evil man from his evil treasure brings forth evil things."

Saint James sensed the evil possibilities of the uncontrolled tongue. He seemed inclined to believe that as a man spoke, so was he. It was, for him, unthinkable that a fountain should send forth both sweet and bitter water from the same opening. Let the man speak: is his speech clean? If so, we know something about the man. We do not expect the fig tree to bear olives, or the vine to produce figs. So, you have the picture of "Devil Lev's" inward and outward life. He was what his speech betrayed.

Many are guilty of playing with talk. They feel they must chatter, like so many monkeys. They say an infinite deal of nothing. Of this habit I hesitate to believe that women are more guilty than are men. Perhaps there is a time for fun and jollity, a time when men and women are simply "off guard." Nevertheless, in the spirit of fun we strive to compete with a comrade. He tells one exaggerated story: I tell one to outdo him. Even fun can go too far. "But I tell you, that of every idle word men speak, they shall give account on the day of judgment." Talking should be a serious matter, even when engaged in for fun.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes speaks of some of the organizations of his time as "gibble, gabble, gobble, git societies." One can spend much time just "gibbling," just "gabbling." And we need a certain amount of just such bantering. We need to come into contact with such buoyant spirits that we go away smiling. I think of Jesus as being sociable, friendly. He seems to have been invited into homes. He seems to have been a very desirable guest at weddings, and at Sabbath dinners. I think He must have been a very agreeable Guest.

We still see some of the power of the magic of words. Word magic is common among the lower forms of civilization. It is common among the superstitious. It is frequent among children. We utter certain words to drive off evil spirits. Doubtless the person who curses and swears must have some belief in the magic of words. Often, we must admit, such speech produces quick results! When "Devil Lev" swore at us boys who trespassed into his woods, we dispersed immediately. He got the expected outcome every time.

An admirable aged Christian gentleman and a popular actor were being entertained by a group of admirers one evening. The actor was asked to give some readings. He agreed on condition that the clergyman would also read. They chose the Twenty-third Psalm. The actor read it first and received a round of applause. Then the clergyman read it. There was an ominous stillness, broken finally by the actor who walked over to his friend and congratulated him. Said he: "I know the Psalm, but you know the Shepherd!" It does make a difference even in one's speech.

The writer has been dealing with words for a long time. He has been trying for more than twenty-five years to convince young people of the sacredness of our speech. Out of my study and experience I have come to feel a sacredness in language. To abuse it is nothing less than, prodigally speaking, a milder form of sinning. It is difficult for me to think of a person pure in heart who does not use clean speech.

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